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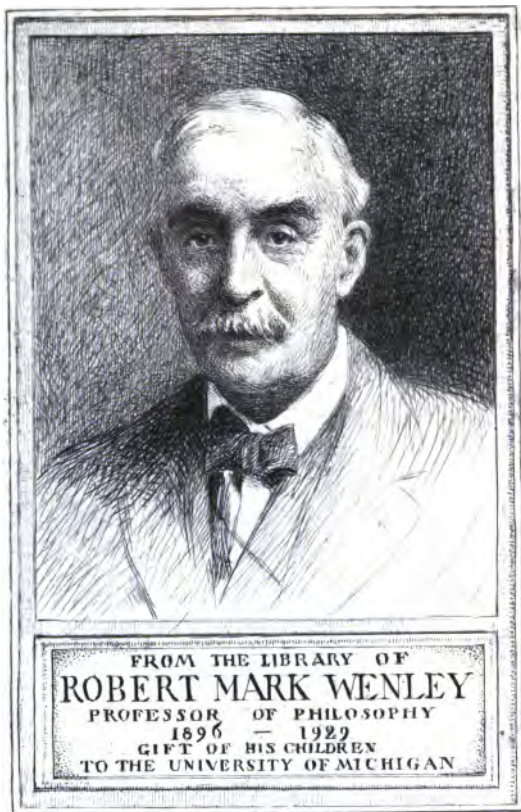
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THE
CHARACTER OF JESUS.

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A SKETCH
OF THE
CHARACTER OF JESUS:

A BIBLICAL ESSAY.

BY

DR. DANIEL SCHENKEL,

PROFESSOR OF THEOLOGY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF HEIDELBERG, AND KIRCHENRATH
IN THE GRAND DUCHY OF BADEN.

Das eigentliche, einzige und tiefste Thema
der Welt- und Menschengeschichte, dem alle
übrigen untergeordnet sind, bleibt der Conflict
des Unglaubens und Glaubens.

Goethe.

TRANSLATED FROM THE THIRD GERMAN EDITION.

LONDON:
LONGMANS, GREEN, AND CO.
1869.

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TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

THE 'Sketch of the Character of Jesus,' the work of Dr. SCHENKEL, Professor of Theology in the University of Heidelberg and 'Kirchenrath' in the Grand Duchy of Baden, which is here presented to the English public, has created an interest beyond the limits of Germany, having been already translated into Dutch, French, Italian, and Swedish, and also into English, in America, by W. H. Furness, D.D., whose work has been made use of in preparing the present translation.

In Germany, Dr. Schenkel's 'Sketch of the Character of Jesus' met with opposition from a part of the clergy, who even attempted to shake the official position of the author; but the whole Liberal party stood by him, and the ecclesiastical court dismissed the accusation as unfounded.

It was not Dr. Schenkel's intention to write the life, but to delineate the moral character of Jesus, which he represents as unique, incomparable, exalted over all; and every unprejudiced reader will see that the book has proceeded from the purest reverence and admiration for the Saviour of the World.

In order thoroughly to appreciate this work, an acquaintance with the other writings of the author is desirable, of which the principal are 'Das Wesen des

Protestantismus,' and 'Die christliche Dogmatik.' Both these works show him to be a theologian, deeply penetrated with a sense of the need of reform in Theology and Church, and seeking to bring this about by thorough scientific and moral labour.

In his 'Christenthum und Kirche' he has shown how much it is in the interest of the Church to reconcile itself with modern culture, and in his recent work on the greatest of German theologians of this century, F. Schleiermacher, the centenary of whose birth Germany celebrated on November 21, 1868, Dr. Schenkel expresses his conviction that the Church can only be saved from a serious catastrophe, by no longer closing itself against the demands of the progress of civilization and science.

Under these circumstances, we think it will be of interest to the English public to see this theologian introduced into England through that book which has caused so great a stir, and which treats of the most important subject in the history of human progress.

This 'Sketch of the Character of Jesus' has often been classed with the writings of *Renan* and *Strauss* on the same subject—but wrongly. A different spirit pervades Dr. Schenkel's work; he believes in the imperishableness and glory of Christianity, and in the incomparableness of the Person of the Saviour. He intends not to destroy but to build up—not to oppose Christian faith, but to purify and renew it.

May this book find a friendly reception and thoughtful consideration in England!

LONDON: June 1869.

PREFACE

TO

THE FIRST EDITION.

JUST five-and-twenty years ago, when commencing my labour as 'Privatdocent' Academical Lecturer on Theology, I attempted, for the first time, to describe in my Course of Lectures the life of Him who might designate himself the 'Life of the World,' in the fullest and most comprehensive sense of the words. Shortly afterwards, in one of the most highly-esteemed theological periodicals of Germany, I ventured upon an examination of the works of D. F. Strauss, Weisse, and Neander, relating to this great subject. Even at that period I was impressed with the difficulty and importance of such an undertaking, and I have become convinced that, without a firm basis of Gospel criticism to stand upon, even a tolerably correct conception of the 'Life of Jesus' is impossible. At that time, also, I publicly expressed my first doubts as to the Apostle John having been the author of the fourth gospel, without coming, however, to a definite and satisfactory conclusion as to the nature of that enigmatical book.

During these five-and-twenty years, how much has passed before our view in the departments of religion and theology, and in our civil and ecclesiastical life! The

fresh movement, which at the beginning of this period gave hope of a healthy development in theological science, has spent itself in a stagnant slough. Theological faculties have become, for the most part, mere offshoots of a dead traditional system; and our rising youth, whose hearts are wont to beat more warmly for truth and right, have submitted themselves to the bonds of a tradition no better than that which the Redeemer of the World contended against even unto death. An icy atmosphere pervades at present our theological literature, and even where it seems as if the green shoots of scientific aspiration were budding, they are too often only the harbingers of a painted spring, offshoots of sophistry and artifice. The deeper, however, is the longing for religious truth and Christian life awakened in our religious communities, and they—striving, as they are just now, after inward and outward self-renewal—know well that this truth and this life have appeared in the Person of Jesus Christ, and that in connection with Him do the people ever find the source of their proper strength and their true elevation.

Through the gloomy years of theological retrogression, it has been with me a necessity and a consolation constantly to refresh myself with the living image of the Saviour. My earlier studies afforded a basis for this, and my regularly returning course of lectures on 'Biblical Theology' called me into farther researches. But I have always felt special interest in the investigations respecting the gospels, which Dr. Baur of Tübingen (so early taken from us), with such noble courage, originated and promoted in his writings. Thus I gradually gained a definite view of the relationship of the four gospels to one another, and that which five-and-twenty years ago floated indistinctly before me, has gradually settled down into a firm

conviction, that the fourth gospel in its present form cannot be the work of the Apostle John, though it may have had its origin in a later school of this apostle. It was possible now to take a complete view of the Saviour's life on a sure authenticated basis. I confess that only after much wavering and after years of inward conflict I arrived at that result of gospel criticism which is the basis of my present work.

This hesitation has also been the chief reason why, although my investigation into the question relating to the gospels have been uninterruptedly going on, I have taken no part in its public discussion. I should not even yet, perhaps, have come forward with this work, were it not that the excitement which the 'Life of Jesus,' by E. Renan, has caused, strongly impressed me with the necessity of endeavouring to meet the urgent demand of our time for a truly human, really historical representation of the Life of Jesus. To meet this demand (although I highly esteem the labours of my predecessors), enough has not yet been done, at least by the German Church. My work disclaims the comprehensive title of a 'Life of Jesus'; a 'Sketch of the Character of Jesus' is what I have attempted to draw. It is the first time this has been done from the point of view of the second gospel, for Renan has not constantly and decidedly chosen this stand-point. Whether I have in any measure succeeded in what I proposed to myself it is not for me to decide. I do not deceive myself as to the reception this work will meet with from the men of tradition. But, happily, among German theologians, and in the German Church, there are not wanting those who seek truth at first-hand, and believe in the duty, not merely in the right, of free inquiry in evangelical theology. To the friendly acceptance and con-

sideration of such I commend this work. May it serve to strengthen and establish faith in the Saviour among the people! For that He devoted His whole life to the poor, the suffering, and the oppressed, I trust I have shown indisputably in this work.

The conviction that He is the Light of the World has been impressed on me while writing this book with a clearness I never knew before; and the gloomier the present, the more comforting is the certainty that this Light will never go out.

DR. SCHENKEL.

HEIDELBERG: *Fourth Week of Advent*, 1863.

PREFACE

TO

THE THIRD EDITION.

WITHIN a few months a third edition of this work has become necessary, and, at the desire of the publisher, it appears in a cheaper form, which places it within reach of a larger circle of readers. The favourable treatment it has received in most of the public criticisms claims my cordial acknowledgment, and warrants the belief that, generally speaking, that which I aimed at has been rightly understood. Violent attacks also have been made upon it. A clerical faction has set up its inquisition, published a kind of bull of excommunication, denounced me to all people as an apostate from Christ, and called upon the authorities for strong measures against me and my official position. That, in Baden so ridiculous an anachronism should be witnessed, I had not expected. The publication issued against me, rude in its tone, and suited for the coarsest nerves, exhibits in its contents an inconceivably low degree of culture in the authors and signers, an intellectual feebleness and moral weakness, which I should not have ventured to attribute to that

party. My book, from beginning to end, is misunderstood and misrepresented, its conclusions are distorted, and consequences wholly foreign to the book are drawn from it. It was not my intention to present a 'doctrine' concerning the Person of Christ; that is to be found in my 'Christliche Dogmatik.'^{*} The investigations I have pursued in this book are of a purely historical nature. The results arrived at certainly have not been obtained from Church dogmas—neither have they been drawn from imagination, but from Biblical sources. I may have erred—let me be taught. I may have made a mistake—let me be refuted. Denunciations are certainly not arguments, and a charge of heresy is no refutation.

For five-and-twenty years, according to the humble measure of my abilities, but with an honest will, I have served the cause of the Gospel and the Master, whom in this book I heartily acknowledge. I have written it solely in the service of evangelical truth—to win to the truth those, especially, who have been most injuriously alienated from the Church and its interests, in a great measure through the fault of a reactionary party blinded by hierarchical aims. In seeking to present a sketch of the character of the Saviour, I was bound by the nature of the case to delineate his human side. It is precisely this circumstance which, although the creed of the Church distinctly recognizes the real humanity of Jesus, appears to have kindled the wrath of the men of tradition. It will neither terrify me, nor shall it irritate me, but rather impel me, so far as God gives me power, to spend my

^{*} Schenkel, D.: Die christliche Dogmatik vom Standpunkte des Gewissens aus dargestellt, 2 Bde.

last breath in the service of the holy cause of evangelical truth and freedom. I know that in so doing I shall only honour and glorify Him who came into the world to bear witness to the truth.

DR. SCHENKEL.

HEIDELBERG, on *S. John the Baptist's Day*



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A SKETCH OF THE CHARACTER OF JESUS.

FIRST SECTION.

INTRODUCTION.

CHAPTER I.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PERSON OF JESUS AND THE REPRESENTATIONS OF IT HITHERTO GIVEN.

1. No religion has its fortunes and results so closely bound up with the person of its founder as the Christian religion. The internal struggles of development, as well as the outward position of Christianity in the world, are inseparable from the name of Jesus Christ. The shameful instrument of martyrdom on which he died has, through his name, become the sublimest symbol of human self-sacrifice, honour and virtue. The main propositions of Christian doctrine have been formed from the conceptions of the person of Jesus which have successively gained acceptance and authority in the Christian community. Even within the apostolic Church different tendencies grouped themselves according to the convictions which prevailed respecting the founder of the Christian religion. The deep-seated contrast between Judaism and heathenism showed itself most clearly in the opposite views that were held about the nature, the significance, and the dignity of the person of Jesus. Just as it was impossible for a correctly-thinking Jew to acknowledge another and equal divine being *beside* the one true invisible God, so was it easy for a born heathen to picture to himself a motley group of divine personages, sharing equally or in but slightly different degrees the fulness of the one divine being. Thus,

at this *one* point especially, was kindled the conflict which, lasting for centuries, split the Christian Church into different directions, and into different confessions. There is no doctrinal controversy of the Church which, in its deepest roots and ultimate issues, may not be traced back to a difference in the fundamental conception as to the person of Jesus.

Long before there existed a *catholic*, that is, a dominant Church, Christian thinkers separated into two main directions, of which one was, step by step indeed, but always irresistibly, overpowered by the other. The strict Jewish-Christian tendency considered Jesus *as simply* a man, a highly to be honoured reformer of Judaism, who had improved and purified the Old Testament law, fulfilled and realised the prophecies. The Gentile-Christian tendency, on the other hand, beheld in him a person endowed with *divine power and dignity*, who, until into the fourth century, was mostly held to be subordinate to the supreme God and Creator of the world; but in the course of further conflicts the conviction gained the ascendancy that he was of perfect equal being with the supreme God and Creator, even true and highest God, and that his true humanity was no hindrance to his uniting in himself all the attributes of the true Godhead.

Until into the seventh century, the conquered Jewish-Christian party gathered together its last powers, at least to prevent the admission of the full equality of the person of Christ with the one supreme God. In vain; the doctrine of the unconditional divinity of Jesus Christ was then exalted into an inviolable law of the State, and established in the Church dogma of the Trinity, with all the supports of apparent learning, as incontrovertible. Even the Reformers did not venture to touch the foundations of the Church dogmas thus laid, illogical as it was to build a new edifice of doctrines upon an old basis which, in the course of time, had become decayed.

That there runs an essential contradiction through that representation of the person of Jesus which, by means of the Christian State-Church, became in course of time legally established, and was received into Protestant confessions of faith and public catechisms as self-evident and beyond improvement, will not now be denied by any unprejudiced inquirer. It is essential, above all things, to the idea of a person, that he is in his inmost self a unit; only upon this supposition can he be historically comprehended. This unity

is by the traditionary doctrine destroyed in the person of the Redeemer of the world. In the Church creed Jesus Christ is represented as a double being, as the personal union of two existences, which in themselves have nothing in common, but rather contradict each other, and only by means of a miracle transcending all comprehension have been brought into the closest and most inseparable connection. Accordingly, he is *man and God* in one and the same person. Church theologians have made great exertions to represent as intelligible and possible this inseparable union of God and man in one person. But they have always had at last to confess that the matter is incomprehensible, and that an impenetrable mystery wraps the personality of Jesus Christ. In a case, however, in which the point aimed at is the elucidation of an historical fact, an appeal to mystery and miracle is, for the purposes of knowledge, worthless. It reveals to us the incapacity of theological thinking, to make consistent what is self-contradictory, to render intelligible what is historically incomprehensible.

That Jesus Christ once lived as 'true man and true God' among men, and is still living on, as such, above men, is a proposition that demands the gravest consideration. How can a person, possessing God's illimitable attributes and able to manifest them any moment, be at the same time subject to those limitations which belong distinctively to the nature of man? Man as such is not omnipotent, on the contrary his power is very limited; he is not omniscient, he knows very little in comparison with the sum total of things worth knowing, even if great mental endowment be combined with moral energy; he is not omnipresent, he is only able at one time to be present at one point of space. If it be taught that Jesus Christ was, and still is, all-powerful, all-knowing, and all-present, then it follows that the attributes of a man, in the full and true sense of the word, are wrongly ascribed to him. In no way in fact can the traditional doctrine make plain how Jesus Christ, as a personality invested with all the attributes of the divine being, lived a really finite and limited human life, subject to pain, disease and death. Statements, such as that he imposed limitations on himself in regard to his divine fulness; that he made no use, or only a partial use, of his divine attributes; that he laid aside or did not possess such during his earthly life, are not only empty and

unmeaning subterfuges, but are also a degradation of the dignity and glory of God. A God who limits himself, is a God who ceases to be God; for to the being of God, it belongs above all things to be unlimited. By propositions of this sort, Christian theology sinks again to the level of heathen conceptions of God. It makes Him a being changeable and divisible, that is, a mere personification of creature forces and powers. A standpoint, from whence God is thus regarded, has already fundamentally surrendered itself; it believes no longer sincerely in its own teaching.

2. All this may have great significance for theological science, but is it really of such importance to the life of the Church what views are entertained about the nature of the person of Jesus Christ? We cannot, it seems to us, ascribe too high an importance to the influence which the doctrine concerning the person of Christ exercises over the life of the Church. It is in fact not to be questioned, that as this doctrine has taken form, so has the Church itself taken shape; and that in the same measure in which this doctrine has deviated from the truth, the life of the Church has taken a form directly against the original intentions of Christ. If the person of Christ be indeed of so wonderful a nature as the theology of the Church has settled it to be, and if it be so entirely incomprehensible how such a person could ever have lived an historical existence, and still lives in a glorified state beyond the grave, then indeed must it be a specially great merit in a man so completely to renounce his reason that he holds himself convinced of the miraculous and incomprehensible, or rather, that he has *faith* in it without being convinced. What the traditionary Church doctrine calls *faith*, stands in the closest connection with the representation of the nature of the person of Christ described above. Within the strict ecclesiastical circle, from the standpoint of its orthodox theology, the first condition of genuine Christian piety has always been considered to consist in holding, with regard to the person of Christ, the most contradictory for possible, the most incomprehensible for real. Thus have reason and understanding been dissociated from Christianity, and piety has been set in a fundamentally hostile attitude towards intellectual growth, the culture and progress of nations.

A thing true in itself became in this way a caricature. It is true that piety is an *immediate* relation of the human spirit

to the Infinite and Eternal; it is true also that the Eternal and Divine, as such, is incomprehensible, and that man in the ground of his spirit is absolutely dependent on God. But when the reflective power is exercised upon the nature and experiences of piety, then we are no longer dealing with an original and immediate relationship to the Infinite and Eternal; it is no longer a *religious* process that takes place; we are then occupied with the *finite* activity of the reason which creates ideas, and with the reflective action of the understanding, and it is therefore, indeed, unreasonable and unintelligent to impose silence upon the reason and understanding in the sphere in which they *alone* have authority. Every dogma is a result of the action of reason and understanding. The reason and understanding of churchmen and theologians have given existence to the doctrines of the Church concerning the person of Christ. How, then, can reason and understanding be forbidden to examine the reasonable and historical claims of dogmas brought into existence, it may be, by a wrong or insufficient exercise of these very powers? How can they be required to render unconditional homage to their own perhaps very defective work, and bow blindly before it as before an infallible revelation from God? And yet the Church doctrine of the person of the Saviour was to be maintained by imposing silence upon reason and understanding, and a blind assent to the doctrine was required, or if circumstances called for it, enforced. The result was, that a distinction between two kinds of truths came from that time to be recognised: truths of *reason* in the department of secular science, truths of *faith* in the department of theology. In the former, investigation was carried on; in the latter, blind submission was yielded, especially so long as the slightest opposition to the reigning doctrine was punished with fire and sword. It astonishes some that the edifice of Catholic doctrine has stood so long unshaken. The history of heretics in the middle ages solves the enigma. By the reckless use of power, by a system of unheard of cruelty and oppression, it is possible to perpetuate any error.

When once the doctrine concerning the person of Christ had broken the connection between knowing and believing, between reason and piety, between secular wisdom and Church dogma, it was but an inevitable further result that

this schism should gradually extend to all the relations of life, separating the interests of the Church from those of the State, of the clergy from those of the people, of the laity from those of the theologians; that it should cause the ecclesiastical to take precedence of the secular, monastic life to be esteemed holier than family life, and the papal power to be honoured above the imperial. As the godhead in the person of Christ was made to signify infinitely more than the manhood, so the Church's truths of faith were infinitely exalted above the secular truths of reason. Anything temporal, civil, or political, appeared in and by itself worthless and insignificant; as such it had no eternal import. It could gain real worth and substantial claims to consideration only through its connection with the divine, and to effect this, those who had the guardianship of the Church truths of faith and the dispensation of grace—the priests—became indispensable. They, out of the fulness of heavenly treasures entrusted exclusively to them, dispensed the Church's means of grace only upon condition that they were received in faith; that is, with the complete renunciation of all claim to think and to will for one's self. The decided rupture of the Church with the claims of reason, with the results of scientific inquiry, and with the progress of intellectual culture, found its fullest expression in the doctrine of the mass, or the continued bodily sacrifice of Christ, by the agency of the priesthood, for the expiation of the sins of the community. In the mass the lay-understanding was supposed to accept the belief that a substance changed its nature without change of its properties; and, after contradiction had drawn down the most fearful consequences on those who ventured upon it, the lay-understanding acquiesced. The Church having gained the advantage on this point over the understanding of the laity, could dare all things against it; a sense of boundless power soon thrust it up to the dizzyest height of self-exaltation.

3. The Reformers, as has already been remarked, did not venture to subject the traditional doctrine concerning the person of Christ to a thorough revision, yet the central principle from which they started could not fail in the course of time to lead to a radical reconstruction of it. Roman Catholicism had brought all self-acting on the part of the laity in the sphere of piety to a stand-still; it had at the

same time lifted off from the individual the burden of personal responsibility; all care and labour for the salvation of the soul the Church had transferred from the laity to herself. Catholic piety thus is essentially *ecclesiastical*, and Catholic faith a self-renunciation of the individual in favour of Church authority. Protestantism, on the contrary, in the sphere of piety, recognised the rights of conscience, and the freedom of conscience, in the laity. Fundamentally, it presupposes that every Christian is to work out his own salvation upon his personal responsibility. Care and labour for the Church is assigned to the whole body, and therefore to every member of it. Protestant piety is therefore essentially *moral*, and the Protestant faith religious-moral self-culture of the individual in his immediate relation to God.

Roman Catholicism, because it is essentially ecclesiastical, rests therefore essentially upon *tradition*. It is welded to traditionary doctrine and observances as with iron bands. If it forsook its traditions it would leave its very foundations. The hope that genuine Roman Catholicism will ever decide for reform is therefore an idle dream. The hour of its reform would be the hour of its self-destruction.

Protestantism, because it is essentially moral in its nature, rests therefore essentially upon *free inquiry*. It has no interest in clinging at all cost to a traditionary and established state of things; it has rather exerted its utmost strength to tear itself away from the traditions and institutions of the past. It is not the religion of ecclesiastical or political interests, but the religion of the moral and eternal needs of man; the religion of conscience, of reason renewed by conscience, and of the will sanctified by enlightened reason. Protestantism, therefore, is not satisfied with customary usages so long as they only serve the ends of self-seeking and selfishness, but drives and presses man to knock at the gates of *truth*, and not to rest until he has penetrated to the ultimate causes and powers by which the process of the religious-moral development of mankind is conditioned and brought about.

When Protestantism took up into its creeds and dogmas, without further revision and investigation, the Catholic doctrine of the middle ages in regard to the person of Christ, it was still following *Roman Catholic* method. From the fear of consequences, it failed, in relation to this dogma, to

apply its fundamental principles. But the punishment of departing in practice from principle soon followed. Upon the doctrine respecting the person of Christ, as we have already remarked, the Christian doctrine of faith is essentially dependent. As the Reformers suffered the self-contradictory doctrine of the Roman Catholic Church concerning Christ to remain, it necessarily followed that they had to settle the doctrine concerning faith in a way that excluded scientific investigation. In fact, the Protestant confessions, especially the Lutheran, do for the most part demand a faith that renounces all freedom of thought, denies to reason all participation in the formation of Church doctrines, and surrenders itself unconditionally to the traditions of the Church.

Here is substantially, again, the Catholic notion of faith; it lacks the nerve of moral life, the sting of conscience, the undying incentive of a thirst for the truth. Protestantism therein denied its origin, its destiny, its moving impulse. It forgot that the doctrines about the person of Christ received from the Catholic Church were likewise the result of the activity of reason and the understanding. While it gloried in having broken away from the authority of human traditions, as it certainly had done in principle, it propagated without scruple, and by external force, the traditions of old Church councils and the dogmatic formulas of Romish theologians, and forced the minds of men relentlessly into the bonds of an obsolete letter.

It has been for a long time the custom to treat Rationalism, so called, with supreme contempt; and yet Rationalism was only a necessary step on the way to self-consistency and self-emancipation for Protestantism, which had come into contradiction with itself, and only through this step has the latter decisively released itself from its traditional connection with Roman Catholicism. The key to the understanding of Rationalism lies in the traditional doctrine concerning the person of Christ. It has not, indeed, untied the knot with care; it has severed it with a somewhat rude sword-cut. At the same time, for the renovation of that doctrine, it has rendered service permanent and indisputable. It has brought back to a simple representation the contradictory double being to which the traditional doctrine of the Church has attached the name of Christ; it has sought to apprehend the person of Christ humanly. Certainly, neither religiously nor

historically has it done justice to the elevation and uniqueness of the character of Jesus. Christianity is a religion; Rationalism an idea of the schools. Roman Catholicism drew its portrait of Christ in accordance with its ecclesiastical interests; Rationalism in accordance with philosophical hypotheses, which, it is not to be denied, are very meagre and unsatisfactory. The rationalistic representation of Christ not only leaves the feelings cold, the imagination empty, and the heart indifferent; it fails also to make it clear to the understanding how this wise Rabbi of Nazareth—this enlightened Jew, who, for his devotion to the enlightenment of the world, was, by priestly hatred and official jealousy, put to death on the cross—succeeded in establishing a religion for the world, and in turning for centuries the stream of all human culture into a determinate channel. According to the suppositions of the rationalistic theology, one would have expected from Christ rather the instituting of an order of 'illuminati' than the founding of a Church for the world. It is in reality not possible to *believe* in the Christ of Rationalism. His person is made quite transparent and intelligible for the understanding, but the effect which he has produced is not accounted for. Rationalism fails to represent in his person what is wanted to explain this effect: the original communion with the Divine, the infinite; the Divine does not appear as present in him. It is only a Divinity outside and above the world that Rationalism recognises; and so, according to this theory, there is no new revelation introduced with Christ, no new creative starting-point in the world's history. As, from the rationalistic point of view, Christ is but the merely human bearer of a new degree of knowledge, religious and moral, there is wanting, in this school, not only the idea of a Church, but still more, the reality of a fellowship. The pulpit becomes the professor's chair, the community—the auditory.

4. But Rationalism has nevertheless undermined the traditional and self-contradictory dogmas concerning the person of Christ; it has brought the Saviour humanly nearer to men; it has awakened a want which can find its true satisfaction only in a personal and moral communion with Christ. An important step beyond Rationalism has been taken by Schleiermacher. The picture which this great theologian gives us of the Saviour is drawn in accordance with the wants of

the human heart, which yearns inappeasably to live in immediate communion with God, and to become personally conscious of the possession of the eternal and the holy. In the person of Christ, according to Schleiermacher, the eternal and the holy is humanly present to man; vital communion with Christ is the communion of man with the Divine life itself. By Schleiermacher the brittle metal of the old dogmas of the Church is melted again into the warm flow of modern devout feeling; the external cover of the miraculous falls away as dross in the fire, and the moral form of the Saviour comes forth as refined gold. The portrait of Christ, as the *moral* ideal of the human heart, is the central point of Schleiermacher's theology. One of the most beneficent consequences of it was, that it restored a *moral* worth to faith as a voluntary personal surrender to the holy idea actualised in the person of Christ.

Although the Christology of Schleiermacher opened up a path from this point, it has not sufficed to satisfy the Christian consciousness of our times in its deepest wants. In the objection so often made to Schleiermacher, that his idea of Christ owes its origin to the peculiar wants of an individual, there is considerable truth. Schleiermacher was too much under the influence of the philosophy of his day to succeed in an attempt, even if he had cared to make one, to produce an authentic *historical* portrait of the Saviour. It was not the simple impulse towards the truth, the un-mixed longing to see the Saviour precisely as he had actually revealed himself to the world, that chiefly swayed Schleiermacher in his representation of Christ. His idea of a Christ was drawn in accordance with his *own religious needs*. Only such as shared his wants could find full satisfaction in his representation. Its personal origin is the reason why only a theological school, and this against his will, has resulted from the teaching of Schleiermacher, and why he was unable to call into existence a renewed Church for the people, to which the times so earnestly pointed. His mind lacked an unbiassed historical faculty, and freedom from philosophical theories. The Christ of Schleiermacher is the artistic creation of the noblest and purest religious sensibility of modern times, rather than a delineation from original sources of Jesus of Nazareth as he went about and taught, laboured among the people, and for the people suffered and died.

For the same reason also the school of Schleiermacher was no match for the assaults made by D. F. Strauss, in his 'Life of Jesus,' upon all the representations which up to that time had been given of the person of Christ. While the smaller and more logical portion of Schleiermacher's followers approached the stand-point of the Tübingen critic, by far the larger part, seized with terror, showed themselves ready for the largest admissions of the obsolete ideas of the Church, at the same time with considerable concessions to the tendency of the modern world—consciousness. Undoubtedly this false accommodation—being without any firm, scientific basis, and without the power and logic of the old Church's faith, which, from its exclusiveness, always possesses some power of resistance—only served to hasten the destruction of the traditional doctrine.

Since in the work of D. F. Strauss the image of the Redeemer, as handed down by the Gospels, has been dissolved into a motley series of half unconscious fictions according to the apprehension of the primitive Christian age, there is no higher task for Christian science than to gather from the existing records, instead of this pre-eminently negative and consequently unsatisfactory result, a real portrait of Christ, faithful to the original, and of genuine historical truth. This task is closely connected with the questions of the times now awaiting solution. For, at present, the great want of the Church is, above all things, that the life of the masses should be penetrated thoroughly and anew with the spiritual and moral powers of Christianity. The traditional forms and formulas in which the Christian community has been wont for centuries to express its religious consciousness have more or less outlived themselves; for there lies at their foundation a theory in regard to the person of Christ which from the beginning has carried contradiction in itself, and hindered all free personal appropriation of the Saviour. The dark horror of the supernatural, as it has been engendered and propagated by the traditions and institutions of the Church of the middle ages, the slavish fear of the civil law that defended the power of the Church, the hope of reward hereafter, and the dread of future torment—these traditional supports of Christianity have done their work and become rotten. Faith in the Saviour of the world must rest on firmer grounds than superstition, priestcraft, or an imagina-

tion filled with happy or with terrible visions. Confidence, love, and the voluntary self-devotion of the members of the community, must become the pillars on which that faith shall in future rest. It must be borne by *universal conviction*, by the spiritual and moral *wants* of mankind, by the educating influences of the times; and, by it, human culture will be consecrated, and civilization become thorough. But, on these very grounds, faith in what is highest and holiest to a Christian cannot set itself as an obstacle to the progress of human culture. Far from impeding the rich development of human faculties and powers, far from suppressing the grand capabilities lying within the mind of the people, faith in Christ must rather become the highest and noblest motive power by which alone all that is truly worthy of man—all that in the State is conducive to public good, all that promotes culture in society, all that is good, noble, and beautiful in public life—shall grow till it bears its perfect fruit.

5. We renounce all hope that there will ever be produced a 'Life of Jesus,' in the full meaning of the word. We do not need it; we are satisfied with a delineation of the character of the Saviour. This it is which we do not find at the basis of the Church dogmas concerning his person. How can any strictly historical features of character exist in a personality that never actually had a beginning, never developed itself in time, never really passed through the conflict with temptation; but, from the first, was essentially the same as when at the end it reached its perfection? The Christ of the Church dogma is really incapable of progress; such a picture of a life lacks the deep interest of individual growth and the development of personal character. The trials that befall this Christ, the opposition with which he meets, the crushing fate to which he finally succumbs—what meaning is there in all this when made to refer to the majesty of the Godhead unsusceptible of suffering and pain, high above mortality and death, and, only of his own free-will, withholding the thunderbolts of his omnipotence, wherewith he can, at any moment, annihilate the adversary? Since the appearance of D. F. Strauss's 'Life of Jesus,' much has undoubtedly been done towards the production of a life of Jesus according to the original records. If the public faith of the Church has been, as yet, but little advanced by it, this is be-

cause, with the exception of Hase, Ewald, Baumgarten, and Keim,¹ they who have attempted to represent Jesus have furnished only very imperfect contributions towards portraying his character. But after the valuable labours of the theologians above mentioned, much remains yet to be done. We confront here, it is true, a task so difficult and so inexhaustible, that we cannot hope it will ever be executed satisfactorily. For out of the narrowest historical framework, and with the scantiest sources of information, there is to be presented in the worthiest possible manner a phenomenon unquestionably the most exalted and the richest in results in the history of the world. That, to the last there will remain much not comprehended; that unknown influences worked together in the life of Jesus—forces which no human sagacity will ever succeed in estimating—there can be no doubt. But science takes up the task of apprehending as near as possible even the greatest. God himself is the object and aim of its inquiries. Though divine truth is infinite, yet its destiny is to serve a finite world. Only let science guard itself against the illusion that the representation of a fact is the fact itself, that the finite reflection of eternal truth is the sun of truth itself. The work which we have here undertaken is not to write the ‘Life of Jesus’; our aim goes no farther than to delineate the character of Jesus, so far as this is possible, in accordance with authentic records. How Jesus became what he was, under what conditions, and through what struggles and conflicts his character developed itself and reached completion; what he willed, strove for, and accomplished, and in what special ways; wherein the distinctive peculiarity of his living and striving, of his person and his work expressed itself—to show this to the best of our power is what we have attempted. In doing this we had before us not merely the scientific task, but also the wants of the community. We are deeply penetrated with the conviction that the comprehensive and thorough renovation of the Church, which our whole age is labouring to achieve, can only be brought about in union with a renewed faith in the true historical Christ—the Christ living in the history of the world.

¹ The recent attempt of E. Rénan to represent the life of Jesus Christ repeats, in many respects, the faults of the rationalistic period. Compare the *Allgemeine Kirchliche Zeitschrift*, 1863, No. 10, p. 620, edited by me.

CHAPTER II.

THE SOURCES OF THE GOSPEL HISTORY.

1. THE extraordinary difficulty of an attempt like the present arises chiefly from the nature of the sources whence the character of Jesus has principally to be drawn. We mean the four canonical gospels. The other written sources, which still must be used with these—as the Apocrypha and Pseudepigraphs of the Old and New Testaments, the works of Philo and Josephus, the Talmud, &c.—can hardly be compared in importance with the gospels.

There are, down to the present day, two decidedly opposite views respecting the four canonical gospels. The first is that of *Church prejudice*, which proceeds on the assumption that the gospels contain absolutely certain information, and are, in respect to their historical credibility, above all doubt. This assumption rests on the ground that the authors of the gospels, like the authors of the sacred writings in general, were preserved, while writing their works, from all errors by an entirely supernatural influence of the Holy Spirit. Taking this view, proof must be given that there is not the slightest error or contradiction in the gospels. If the least error only is admitted, the supposition of their infallibility falls to the ground. The subterfuge that the Holy Spirit may be in error on unimportant points, and that it is enough so long as this is not the case in important points, is as unhappy as it is unworthy. It forgets that, if error on one point is admitted, it is possible throughout, and that whoever is not true in little things has no right to expect credit for his truthfulness in great things.

In direct contrast to this is the other, viz.: the *unprejudiced scientific* view, according to which the gospels are the real productions of their authors and their times. It seeks to understand them through the peculiarity of their authors and contents, their literary structure, their apparent aim,

and the probable intention with which they were written. It studies the credibility, the genuineness, the probability, and the internal consistency of their statements. It compares them, as far as possible, with other contemporaneous reports as well as with each other; it satisfies itself as to the greater or less literary and historical value of one or the other of these accounts, by the most conscientious, careful, and thorough investigation.

Nothing is clearer than that these two views respecting the gospels cannot be both held at the same time. He who undertakes to describe the character of Jesus must accept one or the other. In fact, whoever addresses himself to this undertaking has already decided between them; for the accomplishment of the work is possible only upon the condition that we possess in the gospels real historical sources, which are to be examined, tested, compared, and estimated according to their historical worth; and out of which the character to be represented must be drawn only as the result of thorough, searching, and comprehensive labour. If the gospels contained information, supernatural revelations, coming immediately from Heaven, we must hold it criminal to alter even a single syllable. That the *unprejudiced* scientific view of the evangelical records is attended with no slight difficulties for one who would portray the character of Jesus, is certainly not to be disputed. Even this unprejudiced inquiry into the historical value and literary credibility of the gospels has led to essentially different results. Indeed, there have not been wanting inquirers who have denied the gospels nearly all credibility. If we sympathised with this view, our attempt to delineate the character of Jesus would be labour lost.

But that such an uncertainty is attached to these documents we are by no means persuaded. Like all other original accounts of facts which have passionately excited the one-sided and intense sympathy of a narrow circle of contemporaries, and created violent factions, the gospels have taken various colourings from different persons. Their statements are of unequal historical value, according as they spring from earlier or later traditions. But their different colouring only shows the more, the rich stream of light and life that flows from him whose acts they relate; and while the unequal historical worth of these narrations invites

the keenest investigation, it proves at the same time that the accounts are independent of each other. Yes, and where fabulous elements have become mixed with the traditions, even these bear historical witness to the extraordinarily unique impression which the personality of Jesus made upon all those who were brought into more or less intimate connection with him.

2. There is not now extant any evangelical record which was written during the lifetime of Jesus. The things that befel him, the things that he did, were, at the first, told and circulated only by *word of mouth* in the little company of his disciples and followers. In the first three gospels is preserved the earliest product of literary activity concerning the work of Jesus, in different gradations of tradition. But even here his portrait is not drawn by the hand of an apostle; for that our Greek gospel of Matthew, in its present form, is not the work of the apostle of that name, is the conclusive result of recent learned investigations.¹ The relation of the first three gospels to one another is a point of peculiar difficulty. Their *relationship* is plain from their frequent agreement, even in the very expressions; while, on the other hand, they as often *differ*. Their relationship is best explained by supposing that an *older document*, used by all—a so-called primary gospel—is the basis of all three. This oldest gospel document was, most probably, composed by Mark as the ‘Gospel of Jesus Christ,’² before the year 60 of our era, in the Church at Rome, to meet the wants of the Western missions. By a later hand, to which we owe our gospel according to Mark in its present form, additions have been made, and greater order has been introduced into the whole. Hence we have a clearer representation of the character of Jesus in this gospel than in the two others which are related to it. Not only are its narratives more vivid, but the fabulous element in the early life of Jesus, the appearances of the risen one, and the ascension are absent altogether. If, as is still supposed by many, according to the theory of Griesbach, Mark had been a mere unthinking transcriber of the first and third gospels, the above omissions would be all the more difficult to account for, as experience teaches that the farther a narrator is from

¹ Consult on this point Bleek, *Einleitung in das Neue Testament*, pp. 5, 94, 285.

² Mark i. 1. So was the original gospel of Mark probably entitled. The *Codex Sinaiticus* preserves this title.

the scene of the events narrated, the more liable he is to adopt fabulous embellishments. Even of what we call a literary tendency, there is in Mark scarcely a trace. That the Messianic era had begun with Jesus Christ, that the kingdom of God had come, that repentance and faith in his person were the conditions of entrance into the fellowship of his kingdom of God—these things Mark seeks to show by the simple facts¹ of evangelical narrative.

The first Evangelist shows unmistakably a literary purpose. In order to produce belief in the Messianic dignity of Jesus, the simple enumeration of his doings and the occurrences of his life is not enough for Matthew. He aims, undoubtedly with pointed reference to the unbelieving Jews, to adduce proofs, from the writings of the Old Testament especially, that Jesus was the Christ, that is, the Messiah promised in the law and prophets, and he even makes use of extremely doubtful genealogical tables² as evidence of the descent of Jesus from David. Just for the very reason that the scene of the events narrated is already more remote from the field of his vision, he delights to go back to the sacred writings of the Jews themselves, and endeavours, though not always happily, to show that Jesus suffered and wrought just so, and not otherwise, because an Old Testament passage had to be fulfilled in his person.³ The doings of the Saviour, and the occurrences of his life, thus receive an involuntary character; they do not present themselves as having grown out of his individual consciousness; they cease to be the results of his personal self-determination; they rather evolve themselves to their minutest particulars, as parts of a prescribed scheme, so that, for example, even the foal⁴ upon which Jesus rode into Jerusalem, and the potter's field which the high council are said to have purchased with the blood-money of the traitor,⁵ were, according to texts in the Old Testament, pre-ordained, and had to serve the fulfilment of predestined redemptive arrangements. Hence in the first gospel, in a much fuller sense than in the second, the whole life of Jesus is viewed as fulfilling a decreed, his-

¹ See Holtzmann, *Die Synoptischen Evangelien, ihr Ursprung und geschichtlicher Charakter*, pp. 67–113.

² Matt. i. 1–17.

³ Matt. ii. 5, 15, 18; iii. 3; iv. 15; viii. 17; ix. 13; xi. 10; xii. 17; xiii. 14, 35; xv. 7; xxi. 5, 13, 16, 42; xxvi. 31; xxvii. 9.

⁴ Matt. xxi. 4.

⁵ Matt. xxvii. 9.

torical scheme of salvation; he suffers his fate rather than accomplishes it. Even in breaking with the Old Covenant and in calling a new dispensation into existence, according to the first gospel, the whole object of his working and striving was that not a tittle of the old law should pass away.¹ There is a richer flow from the sources in the first gospel than in the second. The first is not satisfied with a simple relation of facts, it weaves into the narrative longer discourses of Jesus, the most comprehensive of which, the so-called Sermon on the Mount, points to an already existing 'Collection of his Sayings,' which the author of the first gospel made use of. Still richer sources than those which the first two gospels used, the third Evangelist had at his command,² some of them betraying, even more distinctly, the fabulous element of later formation. In *one* important respect, however, the first three gospels agree. According to all three, the first period of the public life of Jesus was spent in Galilee, and only towards the end, before the final catastrophe, did he journey through Samaria to Jerusalem, where he uttered his great life-thoughts with increased boldness and decision, but where the circle of his enemies closed rapidly round him and prepared a violent end to his career. Of previous public labour in Jerusalem or Judea, the first three gospels show no knowledge. The first and third have, indeed, preserved a passage³ in which Jesus laments his frequent and fruitless attempts to gather round him the children of Jerusalem. This passage has been commonly understood to point to a previous activity in Judea; but we must suppose the final sojourn of Jesus in Judea—according to the first three Evangelists the only one—to have been, in all probability, of lengthened duration.⁴ During this last sojourn Jesus not only taught often at Jerusalem in the temple, but visited the surrounding country;⁵ moreover, time was needed for his opponents, at first undecided how they should proceed against him, to form and mature their plans. A considerable space of time spent in Jerusalem and its neighbourhood towards the end of his career, is indicated by his discourse against the Scribes and Pharisees,⁶ in which, as in the Sermon on the Mount, we have a series of assaults, on re-

¹ Matt. v. 18.² Luke i. 1-4.³ Matt. xxiii. 37; Luke xiii. 34.⁴ Matt. xix. 1; Mark x. 1; Luke ix. 51.⁵ Luke x. 38.⁶ Matt. xxiii. 1; Luke xi. 37.

peated occasions, upon those incorrigible theocrats, which whole series requires a period of some length to be assigned to his last activity in Judea. The time and order of events certainly is not observed with much care in the first three gospels; still, in general, a certain degree of order is visible.¹

We are, in a position, under the guidance of the first three gospels, to trace the gradual formation of the Messianic self-consciousness of Jesus. We are enabled with their help to see that upon his first public appearance he was not perfectly clear about his calling as the Redeemer; that, at that time, he neither declared himself the Messiah, nor demanded recognition as such; that, only from his own inner experiences, and through outward events, did full light break upon him regarding the highest destiny of his calling. We gather also from the first three gospels, that, at the first, he did not attempt to extend his missionary labours beyond the boundaries of Israel; that he needed further light and experience before he could stand firm in the conviction of his calling as the Saviour of all mankind. We learn how rapidly his influence grew among the people; how his power of healing, which he used without the slightest trace of selfishness, won for him the confidence of the suffering many in ever increasing measure; how, on the other hand, his own immediate kindred got out of harmony with him, and would fain have treated him as a madman. A flood of sufferings, struggles and trials broke over his soul before he uttered the decisive word that he was the Messiah.

3. Through these storms—according to the first three gospels—his self-consciousness was gradually brought out into full clearness. To his pure will, in which with the greatest strength was united a consummate wisdom, the heaviest task of all was to put himself in determined opposition to the traditional statutes handed down from the fathers, the moral contents of which he always recognised as divine.

This position he reached only when he had come to see clearly how impossible it was that statutes and traditions could accomplish a religious-moral renewal of his nation and of mankind. That eternal salvation was not to be effected by traditional, legal correctness, was the central life and

¹ In regard to the first three gospels and their credibility as sources of the evangelical history, see Appendix, III. 1.

light of his teachings and consolations. A consciousness of God, infinitely higher and deeper than that of the prophets, flamed up in his soul; and to this, according to the first three gospels, he gave such an expression as could be given to it only by one whose whole desire was concentrated upon *one* point—the increase of eternal life.

Up to this point of time the Theocratic-National party of his country, intellectually represented in the school of the Pharisees, regarded him, we may suppose, with quite as much of hope as of apprehension. But now the moment had arrived when the leaders of this party must necessarily turn against him. It was not any longer the little circle of his immediate relatives, it was now the representatives of the political hopes of the people, the pioneers in the social struggles of the country, who hoped nothing more from him, but, on the contrary, feared from his opposition to the traditions of the fathers the ruin of their own plans which they had long secretly cherished. It was not as a madman that these regarded him. Judging from the extraordinary results of his words and works among all classes of the people, they looked upon him as an instrument of the God-hating kingdom of Satan, as a destroyer of their public, and particularly their sacred theocratic institutions, seeking to overthrow all order, human and divine. And when now in bold contempt of daily increasing opposition, and in the clearest and most profound consciousness of his Messianic calling, he ceased to forbid his disciples to publish the fact, acknowledged by them, that he was the promised One of Israel, then there could scarcely remain a doubt what the result of his life-work would be.

But the loftier the height of his consciousness, and the purer and brighter the splendour of his public career, the darker are the shadows cast upon it, even in the first three gospels, by an enigmatical phenomenon; we refer to the *miracles* which are related to us in his history. Not those miracles of healing which, from the first, bound the multitude to him, and caused him to appear as the physician to all sick and suffering ones. It is not in these that the essential difficulty of the enigma appears. They admit of being, to some extent, explained psychologically, as the effects of a personality endowed with the highest spiritual capabilities and with the rarest moral powers, and regarded by those needing help

with an unbounded confidence. But the later miracles ascribed to Jesus are of an essentially different character. Here we no longer have to do with the removal of diseases, bodily and mental, by the influence of a holy personality, but acts of Almighty power confront us. Nothing less than all the laws of nature appear to be abrogated; not merely does a higher order of nature and of the world take the place of the lower, but the action of Jesus is limited by no natural laws whatever. At a word from him the storm ceases. In his hand a few loaves and fishes are so multiplied as to furnish nourishment for hungry thousands. At his command the life that has departed returns to the corpse. At his rebuke a tree is withered as a punishment for bearing no fruit at a season of the year at which no fruit was to be expected.

In other respects, in the first three gospels, Jesus appears throughout as a true human being, living and moving within the limits of human nature; by his miraculous action these limits are broken through. Miracles of Omnipotence are humanly beyond comprehension.

On this account the question forces itself upon us irresistibly, whether such miracles actually took place, and especially whether they be in harmony with that representation of the character of Jesus which is given by the first three gospels. That a life like that of the Saviour should, soon after its mortal ending, be invested with a rich colouring of fable, lies in the nature of the case, and is confirmed by the reports of his early history and of his ascension. Thus it may be seen how, at any rate, it was possible that the tradition regarding the public life of Jesus could likewise be influenced by fable; and this was the more possible the more wonderful his actual deeds appeared to the people's imagination. The harder it became for the later generations to estimate the spiritual greatness and moral elevation of this unique personality, the more easily we can understand their yielding to the temptation to make the *inner* wonder of his personal greatness and glory evident by *outward* wonders. Besides, it was required that Jesus should not be inferior to the typical men of the Old Testament. As Moses had drawn water from the rock to refresh the thirsty, and had fed the hungry with manna; as Elijah and Elisha had healed the sick and raised the dead, how natural was it to ascribe greater and more glorious deeds to one who was unquestion-

ably greater than Moses, and more glorious than Elijah. It is no device of authors, still less, as from a coarse historical point of view might be supposed, is it falsehood and deceit that we have here. In these extraordinary accounts we have the unconscious homage of a religiously inspired imagination paid to Jesus by disciples and followers touched to the inmost, and seeking by such hyperboles to give expression—inadequate, indeed, when measured by sober historical criticism—to the sacred glow of their admiration, love, and reverence for the heroic form of Him by whom they had been refreshed with living water, fed with the bread of heaven, and raised to an undying life.

By the development of his opposition to the theocracy, and the declaration, that as the Messiah he would thoroughly put an end to the theocratic institution and establish a kingdom of truth, righteousness, peace, freedom and love, an inner kingdom of the spirit, the crisis was brought immediately near. All temptations to a violent insurrection against the established order he had resisted. All cunningly laid snares he had avoided. He had not allowed himself to get involved in any conflict with the Roman power, with the Jewish laws of marriage, or with the civil courts. From any mingling with the political questions of the day he had kept himself apart; nevertheless, it could not be that his opponents, inflamed by hatred, in full possession of power, and provided with all the means of persecution, would fail to find opportunities, under the show of a legal proceeding, to accomplish his destruction. His inner kingdom of Heaven, based on spiritual liberty, could not possibly be in harmony with the traditional statutes of the hierarchical institution, with the temple service, with sacrificial and sabbatical observances, and especially with the projects of national Judaism; still less could he look for the support of the Romans in the religious-moral reform at which he aimed, for they were wont to effect their reforms with the *sword*, and in the present case they could have no inclination to draw upon themselves the deadly hatred of the most powerful party among the Jews. That his teaching should give great offence was inevitable. His explicit declaration that he was the Ambassador and Son of God would, from the monotheistic point of view, be readily misinterpreted as dishonour to God, even as blasphemy. When the last occur-

rences in Jerusalem had completed the rupture with the theocratic party, what conflicts were now before him: the conflict with *his own disciples*, who at heart shared the theocratic hopes, and only with the greatest difficulty could free themselves from the expectation of a political Messiah; the conflict with *his own countrymen*, under the same error, longing for a coming of Christ in the interest of a theocracy that should rule the world; the conflict with *his own flesh and blood*, which in the fulness of life and vigour shrank from the pain and suffering of an untimely and violent death; the conflict with *treachery in his own circle*, which he saw through but could not lay bare. And now follows the for ever touching spectacle of that most innocent suffering, in which the sufferer, though branded and judged as a criminal, reveals himself as the blessed conqueror, and out of which, though destroyed in death, he comes forth the ever-living one.

According to the foregoing intimation, the first three gospels place before us a view of the character of Jesus, which, with the exception of the miracles, is perfectly intelligible in itself, and, in the highest sense of the words, is impressively human and morally elevating.

4. But it is by a fourth gospel that the evangelical history is completed; and in this we meet, strangely enough, with an essentially differently coloured picture of the Saviour.¹ In the first three gospels the sphere of the activity of Jesus is essentially Galilean; but in the fourth, on the contrary, we find him alternating between Galilee and Judea. He journeys frequently with his disciples from Galilee to Jerusalem, and back again; and in the capital, he, at the very first, comes into violent collision with the theocratic party.² There is here no trace of a gradual development of his religious and Messianic self-consciousness, or of a perceptible growth of his inner life. He is already at the first what he continues to be to the end. From the first he manifests his indwelling Divine glory; from the first his disciples believe in him with complete faith;³ from the first he declares that he will put an end to the temple service.⁴ At the very first meeting with Peter, Peter addresses him as the Messiah, as

¹ In regard to the peculiar character of the fourth gospel, see Appendix, III. 2.

² John ii. 13.

³ John ii. 11.

⁴ John ii. 19.

the Son of God; Nathaniel too proclaims him at once as the King of the Jews.¹

How different from all this the first three gospels! What, in the fourth, is related to have existed at once, without any preliminary steps, in the other gospels comes to its completion gradually. According to these, Jesus begins his wondrous deeds, not with miracles of Almighty power, but with acts that quiet rather than excite, chiefly with the healing of the 'possessed,' instances of which, singularly enough, are not even mentioned in the fourth gospel. That the representation of Jesus in the first three gospels does not agree with that given in the fourth, will be acknowledged by every unprejudiced inquirer occupying the present scientific stand-point. The difference is partly explained by the peculiar aim of the fourth gospel. The first three show, more or less distinctly, a simple purpose to give a *narrative* of the most important events of the evangelical history. The first and third Evangelists do not, however, disclaim the further purpose of creating faith in *him* who is the exalted subject of their communications. But although Matthew and Luke do not write with an entirely unprejudiced historical aim, they regard it as their main task to tell what Jesus did, wrought, and suffered. If, in their prefatory chapters, and in their accounts of separate miracles, they transgress the limits of the strict province of history, yet they present the unhistorical in an historical manner, and we find in their writings no background of speculative philosophical ideas. Quite otherwise is it in this respect with the fourth gospel. Here there is an introduction,² in which not the experiences, works, and sufferings of Jesus are recorded, but this earthly life and work of his is traced back to a state before all time, and to occurrences supermundane. It is therefore not only as the Messiah arising in Israel, the most exalted descendant of the royal house of David, the heaven-chosen representative of God's people, and consequently the Redeemer of mankind that he is presented, but rather as the self-revelation of the eternal God, immediately—and from eternity—proceeding from God, and manifesting the holy and everlasting Being in a life of perishable and sinful flesh on earth. It is the Divine light shining from all eternity, which has broken into the darkness of the world in

¹ John i. 41, 49.

² John i. 1-14.

order to illuminate it. After such a statement as this in regard to the personality of Jesus, given in the beginning of the fourth gospel, there could be described in this gospel no development, no growth, no gradual progress towards the consciousness of his Messianic calling. The earthly appearance of Jesus, that which the fourth gospel designates as the 'flesh,' was only the covering which veiled the otherwise unapproachable light of his Godhead. Therefore was Jesus at the beginning of his career the same that he was at the conclusion, the representative of the Heavenly Father, clothed with the attributes and powers of the Godhead itself; and all that he did was solely an unbroken series of radiations from his superhuman glory. Jesus is therefore described in the fourth gospel as omniscient¹ and almighty. If now and then it represents him otherwise, this is to be accounted for by the fact that this gospel likewise is connected with some part of the evangelical tradition, and follows historical documents.

Those theologians who, agreeing with the traditions of the Church, hold the Apostle John to have been the author of the fourth gospel, have an insurmountable difficulty to clear away. There is the fact to be explained that several important events related in the other three gospels have found no place in the fourth, such, for example, as the temptation, the transfiguration, the healing of the possessed, the Lord's Supper, and the Sermon on the Mount. The popular explanation that the fourth gospel is designed only to supply the deficiencies of the other three, not only assigns a very superficial stand-point for the author, but it is contradicted by the fact that this gospel relates many things told in the other gospels, as, for example, the purification of the temple, the healing in Capernaum,² the miraculous feeding of the multitude, the walking of Jesus upon the sea, the anointing at Bethany, &c., while, on the other hand, the omissions in this gospel find a most natural explanation in its fundamental presuppositions. The Saviour, as the personal self-manifestation of the Godhead in the flesh, could not be exposed to temptation to sin, and he whose heavenly glory was poured forth in word and deed from within, like a continuous stream of light, needed no outward transfiguration. The omission

¹ John i. 48; ii. 20; iv. 18; vi. 64.

² John iv. 47.

of the institution of the Lord's Supper is explained by the circumstance that from his dogmatic point of view, the Evangelist could attach thereto only a relatively slight importance, in consistency with his declaration that faith in the Saviour is the true eating and drinking of his body and blood.¹

That the Sermon on the Mount is wanting in the fourth gospel, is due to the position which Jesus takes in this gospel towards the Old Testament law. According to the Sermon on the Mount in the first gospel—the sermon in the vale in the third—Jesus had certainly assigned a new position to the Old Testament law and spiritualised its contents, without however, in any essential point, abolishing it or declaring it invalid. According to the fourth gospel, the Old Testament law is essentially different from the gospel,² the contents of which are grace and truth. For the very purpose of destroying the Old Testament temple did Jesus appear. Legal functions are not his vocation; he did not come into the world to judge the world.³ Only from faith, not from works of the law, proceeds eternal life.⁴ On this account the worship of God is no longer confined to the Old Testament temple, or to any externally sacred place; it is to be rendered in spirit and in truth, needing not the help of ceremonies or symbols.⁵ It is an understood thing in the fourth gospel that Jesus *breaks* the Sabbath.⁶ He tells the *Jews* that the Old Testament Scripture testifies of him; but he hesitates not to say, that it was one of their ‘opinions’ that eternal life was to be found *therein*,⁷ for the letter kills, the spirit only gives life.⁸ Repeatedly in the fourth gospel, there appears a decided contrast to Moses, of whom it is said without qualification, that he did not give the people the true bread from Heaven.⁹ So far is the external fulfilling of the law from bringing salvation, that a special drawing of the Father, a power given direct from heaven, is needed in order to come to the Son;¹⁰ and in the time of the Old Covenant there was no Holy Spirit; that was granted to Christian believers only in consequence of the glorification of Christ.¹¹ In the fourth gospel, Jesus speaks of the Old Testament law as of something foreign that did not concern him; he refers to it as

¹ John vi. 51.⁴ John iii. 36.⁷ John v. 39.¹⁰ John vi. 44.² John i. 17.⁵ John iv. 23.⁸ John vi. 63.¹¹ John vii. 39; xiv. 16.³ John iii. 17; v. 24.⁶ John v. 18.⁹ John vi. 32.

'your law,' 'their law.'¹ He puts *his* teaching in unmistakable opposition to that law;² and only in his teaching—not, therefore, in the law—is truth. Even the renowned ancestor of the Jews, Abraham, appears to the fourth Evangelist in a subordinate position, when declaring that Jesus, the representative of eternal truth, was before Abraham.³ The supporters of the Jewish theocracy are considered as the organs of the devil, and the politico-theocratical kingdom of the Messiah which they had in view, as a kingdom of the devil.⁴

That Jesus designated *all* who had come *before* him as thieves and robbers,⁵ a designation that cannot possibly be understood as applying to his contemporary theocratic opponents, also indicates the most decided opposition of the fourth gospel to the traditionary Old Testament form of life and teaching. Though Moses and the prophets are not here directly referred to, at all events the reference must be to the scribes, as they had established themselves in Israel after the second temple, and had gained authority for their schools. Beyond all question, the fourth gospel shows a deep chasm between Christianity and Judaism, whence the opposers of Jesus are generally spoken of as 'the Jews.' For the same reason, Jesus gives in this gospel 'a new commandment,'⁶ no longer a commandment inspiring fear by the threat of punishment, but a law of love. Of a continual validity of the Old Testament law, we here find no trace. Only the relation towards Christ decides the attitude of the heart towards God.⁷ The law of Christ is to be kept, not the law of Moses. All that is outside of this relation to Christ is no longer divine, but 'of the world.' The spirit of truth, as the spirit of Christ—and no longer the law—is to guide and govern the Christian body.⁸

In view of all this, is it not something different from 'critical perverseness and conceit of the time'⁹ if a gospel showing peculiarities so hard to explain historically, and such remarkable deviations from older evangelical traditions, awaken doubts whether it be written by a disciple and apostle of Jesus, an eye-witness and immediate

¹ John viii. 17; xv. 25.² John viii. 31.³ John viii. 52-58.⁴ John viii. 42, &c.⁵ John x. 8.⁶ John xiii. 34.⁷ John xv. 1.⁸ John xvi. 13.⁹ Meyer, *Crit. Exeg. Handbuch, über das Evang. des Joh.* 4th ed. pref. vi.

voucher of the truth of the facts? The external evidences that John wrote the fourth gospel are, it must be admitted, not so unsatisfactory as they who dispute John's authorship represent them. But it is, nevertheless, true that in the writings of Justin Martyr, that is, about the middle of the second century, there is not a single passage, that can be said with certainty to be quoted from the fourth gospel, not even the supposed quotation from chap. iii. 3-5,¹ and that the gospel was used by Basilides (about the years 125-130), is yet more doubtful. At all events the apostolic origin of this gospel cannot be established by any external evidences; the internal evidence will always be decisive. It certainly then is not easy to understand how an eye-witness, from whom the most authentic and exact reports were to be expected, could, from the very beginning, entirely give up the historical basis, and take a purely speculative stand-point. That John, the apostle of the Jews, should begin his gospel with a theory of the super-mundane and pre-existent 'Logos,' and see in the earthly appearance and career of Jesus, principally the self-manifestation of the Godhead in the flesh, is in itself certainly not probable. We would not give too great weight to the fact that the tone, bearing, and colour of the fourth gospel are not in harmony with the character of the Apostle John as he is portrayed in the first three gospels. The son of thunder,² ambitious of rank in the Messianic-theocratic kingdom,³ and ready to call down fire from heaven upon the Samaritans,⁴ certainly could not, except in consequence of a most extraordinary inward change, become an apostle of the world-embracing love that is in the spirit of the author of the fourth gospel; and although it is not wholly impossible, yet, it is very improbable that the author—as the Apostle John, according to the grounds of probability, internal and external, must be held to be—of the Apocalypse, written as it is in the avenging spirit of a Jewish-Christian, should have written this gospel also, which breathes the tenderest and most unbounded love. That, moreover, the Apostle John, during the later period of his residence in Jerusalem, did not by any means occupy the ground of evangelical freedom, but showed himself still inclined to confine his mis-

¹ Apol. i. 61.² Mark x. 35.³ Mark iii. 17.⁴ Luke ix. 54.

sionary labours to the *Jews*, is evident beyond question, from the Epistle to the Galatians.¹

We attach, however, greater weight to the fact, that in the fourth gospel that part of the activity of Jesus receives the least attention which in the other gospels gives the deepest impression of historical credibility. How can the *eye-witness*, John, the intimate friend of the Lord, accustomed to lean on his bosom, be silent as to the fact, that it was only through frequent internal conflicts and temptations that Jesus moved onwards to the full consciousness of his Messianic calling? How can he represent Jesus as beginning *at once* with the full 'revealing of his glory' before he had come clearly to know that he was destined by the Father to be the Saviour of the world? How can an intimate friend of Jesus, a member of the little circle of the twelve, so represent the relation of the disciples to their master, that immediately upon being called they recognised him as the Messiah, and that indeed in the most spiritually elevated sense of the word? Has not the representation of the earlier gospels much greater probability, namely, that it was only gradually that the disciples attained to a recognition of the Messianic dignity and destiny of Jesus? How can an intimate friend of Jesus put into the mouth of the Baptist, on the very next day after the baptism of Jesus, the confession that Jesus was the Lamb of God taking away the sin of the world, a confession, which if it really proceeded from the mouth of the Baptist at that time, must necessarily have required the Baptist to join the circle of the disciples of Jesus at once in unconditional devotion to his person? We can readily understand how, after the lapse of forty or fifty years, fables should become mixed with the facts of the evangelical history, handed down as it was from one to another by word of mouth. It is easy to be understood also, how the powerful personality of the Saviour should so excite the imagination of the apostolic community as to lead to representations transcending all the ordinary bounds of nature. We find it perfectly comprehensible that upon an otherwise firm historical background, such pictures should be reflected from the idealising enthusiasm of the early Christians; but how an eye-witness intimately acquainted with the facts—and, in the evening of his days, when the eye is doubly sharp for

¹ Gal. ii. 1-10.

what has been seen and experienced in earlier life—should choose for the representation of the evangelical history a philosophical stand-point, and see Jesus only in the brightness of his unbounded preternatural glory—this we cannot understand.

In the first three gospels, the opposition of Jesus to the Jewish politico-theocratic party of the time is perfectly intelligible; for the religious-moral society which he founded had a prospect of success among the Jews only if their theocratic expectations were seen to be groundless and were given up. But that an eye-witness, a born Jew, an apostle, who twenty-five years after the death of Jesus showed a manifest dislike to all personal contact with the Gentile world, and who, as far as he was concerned, had renounced all missionary activity among the Gentiles,¹ should have conceived of the work of Jesus as specially opposed to the Jews, and so represented it, does not seem at all probable. We can understand how an apostle of Jewish origin should represent Christianity as a fulfilment of the Old Testament promises, as a higher stage of the theocratic institution, how to him Abraham, Moses, and the Prophets were so many steps of the ladder which Jesus Christ had ascended. On the other hand, we cannot understand how an apostle, avowedly of Jewish descent, could speak throughout of the Mosaic law and of the Old Testament institutions and ordinances as of things obsolete; how he could find no room, no independent position, or significance for the law and the prophets in the scheme of redemption, and recognise the whole merit of Abraham, whom even Paul calls ‘the father of the faithful,’² as consisting in his having seen the day of Christ. Even the discourses of Jesus given in the fourth gospel, could not have been uttered by him in the connection and sense in which the Evangelist presents them. We will not refer to the almost entirely different character of the discourses of Jesus in the first three gospels, nor to the fact that in the fourth gospel he speaks in the beginning of his career just as he speaks at the close, nor to the indefiniteness and obscurity of many of the thoughts and allusions. The simple circumstance alone that Jesus could not possibly have delivered on the evening before his arrest so long and so connected a

¹ Gal. ii. 9.

² Rom. iv. 1, &c.

discourse as is reported in chap. xiii.-xvii. of the fourth gospel, is sufficient to show that we have here before us a work carefully prepared at a later period, but not the fresh stream of speech gushing directly from the heart of Jesus. And how could an eye-witness and participator in those scenes pass over in his narration that most solemn and impressive occurrence just before Jesus took his weary way to the cross, the institution of the Lord's Supper, which left such an ineffaceable impression, that it is one of the few facts of the evangelical history which has found mention in an apostolical epistle;¹ an institution which early became the social centre of the apostolic communities, the symbol of the tenderest fraternal love, and soon even the culminating point of public worship? Let it not be said that the Evangelist has omitted to mention the institution of the Lord's Supper because it was universally known and in daily observance, and he did not wish to repeat what all knew. Why then did the Apostle Paul repeat this well-known matter to the Christians at Corinth? Neither let it be said that of the events of that last night the Evangelist has chosen only such as suited his purpose. Why then did he not pass over the mention of the torches and lamps and weapons which were carried by those who at the command of the Sanhedrim went to seize Jesus?²

It is a well-known theological vice, when arguments fail to impugn motives. It has been asked, 'Would you then brand the author of the fourth gospel as a deceiver?' A rude way, doubtless, to put an end to all learned investigations. Even if some unknown person wrote this gospel *under the name* of the Apostle John, it was not, according to the ideas of the time, any grave immoral act, as the authors of the Old Testament books of Ecclesiastes and Daniel did not believe they were doing anything wrong in publishing those writings under the names of holy men of a former time. In matters of religion such a pious fraud was considered only as a means of securing for the most precious convictions a more willing and more extended acceptance. Besides, is it not very doubtful whether the fourth gospel was ever intended to pass for the work of the Apostle John? When the Evangelist says:³ 'We *saw* the glory of the Logos, the glory as of

¹ 1 Cor. xi. 23.² John xviii. 3.³ John i. 14.

the only begotten of the Father,' considering the peculiar style and method of this writing, we are not compelled to understand these words as intimating that he had seen Jesus with his *bodily eyes*. He may be understood to mean that he had seen *spiritually* the image of Jesus, glorified by the Holy Spirit in the Christian community.¹ Another passage also² often adduced to prove the author of the fourth gospel to have been an eye-witness, appears on closer examination rather to prove the contrary. For although he who 'knows' that the record of the flowing of blood and water from the side of Jesus is 'true,' *might* have been the author of this gospel, it is more probable that the Evangelist in these words refers to the author of some fragments used by him, whom not without intention he distinguishes from himself. The supplement³ to this gospel is, without doubt, by another writer than the author of the first twenty chapters, which in themselves form a complete whole.⁴

When this supplement, evidently the offspring of the Ephesian group of legends, was affixed to this gospel, the Apostle John had been dead for some time.⁵ It was the author of this addition who aimed at introducing⁶ the gospel to the Christian body as a work of the apostle. That he himself was not the Apostle John is proved by the exaggerated conclusion⁷ which it has been attempted against all probability to separate from the rest of the chapter as an appendix not genuine. Respecting this Lücke rightly says: 'There is no reason why the twenty-fifth verse should be separated from the twenty-fourth. On the contrary, the twenty-fifth verse corresponds with the hyperbolical tone of the narrative in verse 11; and the mode of thought, as well as the style of the whole chapter, betrays a very different hand from that of the Evangelist.'⁸ But this very supplement, claiming so confidently to be the work of John, is a new evidence of how little the religious enthusiasm of that Christian period hesitated to circulate its own works in the world under the protecting cover of a highly-revered apostolic name.

5. In conformity with these considerations, we cannot in good conscience regard the fourth gospel in the form in which

¹ Compare John xvi. 14, 16; xvii. 10.

² John xxi. 1, &c.

³ John xxi. 24.

⁴ John xx. 30.

⁵ John xxi. 25.

⁶ John xix. 35.

⁷ John xxi. 23.

⁸ Lücke, *Commentar über das Evangelium Joh.*, ii. s. 825.

we now have it as the work of the Apostle and eye-witness John. We do not, however, suppose it to be a production, composed with certain aims by a gnostic of the first, or even of the last half of the second century. That the Apostle John lived and laboured for some length of time in Ephesus is certain. It is not improbable that after having lived and laboured in Jerusalem only as an apostle of the Jews up to the time of the last Roman war, he, in Ephesus, became more enlarged in his Christian views. In this city he was brought into connection with the larger body of Gentile-Christians. Here he may be supposed to have gradually got rid of much of his Jewish-Christian narrowness, and to have approached in substance the theology of Paul, the effect of the latter being to transform and elevate his earlier ideas. By this also the image of his Master became transfigured in his mind, and thus from Ephesus there was formed, under the predominating influence of his teaching, a series of representations of the public activity of Jesus, varying considerably from the contents of the first three gospels. These representations, especially after the death of John, and in consequence of the extension of gnosticism, took a speculative colouring. The better elements of these gnostic doctrines it was sought to bring into harmony with the facts of Christianity, and a partial remoulding of the latter was therefore unavoidable. The idea of the person of Jesus was of necessity involved in this process. To satisfy the demands of the new theology, that there might be seen in Jesus the fullest possible manifestation of the Godhead, his life is represented as removed from the sphere of the human, and surrounded with a divine halo. Such representations gave birth to the fourth gospel some time, most likely, after the death of the Apostle John, about the years 110-120, under the influence of that gnostic Christianity which as early as the middle of the first century began to develop itself in Asia Minor. This gospel was composed, with reference to gnosticism, for the purpose of showing that faith in Jesus Christ not only meets the deepest longing of the heart, but also satisfies the highest need of the intellect, and that Jesus Christ is not only the Messiah of the Jews, but the Saviour of the world. It is not to be denied that the author has treated with the greatest freedom the traditional material to which he had access. He has transferred the scene of the

public life of Jesus, for the most part, to Judea, that he might bring out as clearly as possible the antagonism of Jesus to the Jewish theocracy at its very seat. He has made a typical, allegorical use of the Christian traditions. Here and there he has clothed the profoundest ideas of Christian truth in the garb of outward events. Standing at a distance from the time and place of the events of the gospel history, he has looked at Jesus only in the completion of his earthly strivings and conflicts, and shed over the pains and weaknesses of his earthly development the light of a heavenly transfiguration. Important events, recorded in the original documents known to him, he has omitted when they did not fall in with his main idea. And he has transferred into the history of the life of Jesus the antagonism of Christianity to Judaism, as it appeared from the stand-point of his own time and situation, as it looked to him after the judgment of God had been executed in the destruction of the central seat of the theocracy. But he has not wilfully undertaken to invent or create fictions and fables. He has taken out of their historical framework, elevated into the region of eternal thought, and invested with the transfiguring glory of a later century, a selection of reminiscences from the evangelical traditions of the public life of Jesus. He has done this with such an understanding of the inmost nature and ultimate aim of the life-work of Jesus as an earlier age, spiritually and morally less advanced, could not have possessed. The *fourth* gospel therefore is a really *historical* source for the representation of the character of Jesus, but in a *higher, spiritualized* sense of the word. Without this gospel the unfathomable depth, the inaccessible height of the character of the Saviour of the world would be wanting to us, and his boundless influence, renewing all humanity, would for ever remain a mystery. In the separate stages of his development, Jesus Christ was not what the fourth Evangelist paints him, but he was that in *the height and depth of his influence*; he was not always that actually, but he was that essentially. The first three gospels have shown him to us still wrestling with powerful earthly forces. The fourth gospel portrays the Saviour glorified in the victorious power of the spirit over the earthly nature. The former show us the Son of Israel striving in his humanity towards Heaven; the latter, the King of Heaven, who descends, full of divine grace, from

the throne of eternity into the world of men. Our portraiture of him must not forsake the natural, earthly foundation of the first three gospels, if it is to be historically real; but the representation of the character of Jesus becomes eternally true only in the heavenly splendour of that light which streams forth from the fourth gospel.

SECOND SECTION.

THE DEVELOPMENT.

CHAPTER III.

JESUS BEFORE HIS PUBLIC CAREER.

1. A VEIL is drawn over the childhood and youth of Jesus. The evangelical tradition informs us that his parents were settled at Nazareth in Galilee. Nazareth certainly is considered his paternal home.¹ Here he grew up in humble circumstances; his father—a man of the people, belonging to the working class, a carpenter—was the head of a numerous family, and the eldest son learned his father's calling.² In this home Jesus became early acquainted with the toils and cares connected with narrow means. He had four brothers, and some sisters also.³ A child of the people, he shared from his earliest years the sorrows and joys of the people. Whatever there was of living piety and pure morality immediately around him, he, being open to all that was good, early imbibed. He learned in his father's house to deny himself and to bow to the dispensation of God in those straitened circumstances. The temptations to vanity, dissipation and pleasure, inevitable in richer and more splendid conditions of life, could, in a lot like his, scarcely reach his soul. All the more vividly both to his eye and heart, from his early youth, did the wants and privations of the lower and middle classes of the people present themselves. He could feel doubly for the lowly and the poor, because in his youth he had borne their burdens and experienced their needs.

Only one circumstance of the period of his early youth is

¹ Mark vi. 1; Matt. xiii. 54.

² Mark vi. 3.

³ Matt. xiii. 56.

preserved to us in the evangelical history. On one recurrence of the Pascal festival, at the age of twelve, he accompanied his parents to Jerusalem.¹ His separating himself from them in the crowded city, and being found, after a long search, in the synagogue of the temple among the Rabbins, deeply interested in their proceedings, is a sign of early spiritual and moral maturity, but of no unchildlike self-assertion. He took part in the conversation, and was kindly listened to by the teachers. His striking answers to the questions put to him—which, no doubt, were adapted to his age—drew upon him the unmingled admiration of those who were present.

This narrative is doubtless authentic; it has no trace of fabulous embellishment. An early maturity of mind, a deep yearning for the knowledge of truth, and communion with God, no doubt manifested themselves in the rising boy Jesus, and attracted the notice of wider circles. His conduct in Jerusalem is not inexplicable. Immediately that the prospect of religious-moral advancement opens to him, all other earthly duties retire before it. In this way his leaving his parents without asking permission or giving them any notice, thereby causing them great anxiety, is explained and justified. It is characteristic of an enthusiasm for lofty aims, that, absorbed in them, it forgets other considerations which may seem to lie much nearer. And it is on account of this undivided devotion to the highest, this unwearying love for truth, this inextinguishable aspiration after God, which drove him at twelve years of age into the midst of the teachers of the people, *seeking and enquiring*, not teaching and imparting, that he was a mystery even to his parents.² They had on their part, up to this time, observed nothing extraordinary in him. He had not outwardly, in any respect, gone beyond the limits of the natural laws, and on this account the whole occurrence at Jerusalem seemed to them nothing less than a departure from the obedience which was due to them. Jesus, however, was not conscious of wilful disobedience. That to the reproach of his parents: 'We have sought thee with anxiety, (which thou oughtest to have spared us,)' he also replied with a reproach: 'I was in my Father's house, where I belong, (and where, had you understood rightly, you might easily have found me,)' is an

¹ Luke ii. 41.

² Luke ii. 50.

unveiling of the inmost bent of his character. There is no trace of culpable childish impetuosity in this answer. On the contrary, there is here a rising irrepressible *presentiment* of his future higher destiny, to devote himself to the affairs of the kingdom of God, and that he ought, even thus early, to make earthly claims subordinate to his eternal duty.

We must guard, however, against putting a so-called deeper meaning into the words of Jesus, 'Must I not be in my Father's place?'¹ These may be nearly the words he spoke; but no ray of consciousness of a divine sonship breaks forth from them; and Jesus did not intend them to assert his divine origin or proclaim his future Messiahship. Under the Old Covenant pious Israelites acknowledged and worshipped God as their 'Father;' in earnest yearning after the pitying Father of his people, the youthful Jesus turned his steps towards the sanctuary in Jerusalem. Had he gone among the Rabbins in the synagogue, conscious already of a divine mission, in the full sense of his Messianic calling, he would not have dared to have been satisfied with returning striking answers to pointed questions; but as a preacher of repentance, and a herald of salvation, although only twelve years old, he would have felt himself bound to lift up his voice among them in warning and consolation. That nothing of this kind is related of him proves how *human* is the *first* line of his character drawn by the gospel history.

Extraordinary at that time, by the side of his yet immatured insight into religious problems, was the strength of his religious sensibility, and the feeling of filial piety for a moment withdraws before it. The Evangelist has not omitted to intimate that similar incidents to the one in the synagogue of the temple did not often occur. As if to erase the dubious impression which might be produced by this independent conduct with regard to his parents on the part of the child Jesus, we are told that he went back from Jerusalem to Nazareth, and was there *subject* to his parents.² He does not appear to have expressed himself in the same way on any other occasion, for his mother laid up in her memory the words as the only ones of the kind. The spirit of the boy was withdrawn into itself, and after-generations have cherished a fond remembrance of the still, pious young life

¹ Luke ii. 49.

² Luke ii. 51.

that he led from this time on, inwardly growing, steadily forming itself, and thus through spiritual concentration unfolding into power. In consequence of this, not only did his understanding gain clearness, but he attained that expression of ineffaceable lovingness which is in favour both with God and man.¹

2. We have no certain information about the preparation and education of Jesus for his future calling. A so-called learned education he never had. There are no traces of anything of the kind in his public discourses, nor do his contemporaries ascribe it to him.²

The insight which he had in so high a degree into the nature and tendencies of the different religious parties among his countrymen, he obtained from personal observation and direct intercourse with their chief men and leaders. Doubtless he early regarded and studied the different parties thoroughly; but he became neither Pharisee nor Sadducee, neither Herodian nor Essene. Devotion to any particular school or sect was incompatible with that independent religious-moral character which even as a boy he had shown at Jerusalem. From the book of nature he had doubtless learned. He surely received many elevating impressions from nature under the serene sky of Galilee, on the shores of the lake of Tiberias, and at the foot of the wooded mountains around. Yet it was not these that determined his religious character.³ He grew from within outward, not chiefly from without inward. Even as a youth, we may well suppose, he went his own way, repelled by what many esteemed most highly, pained deeply by the foolish hopes of his countrymen—alienated as they were from the love of truth and the earnest work of life—and with a presentiment, as yet dim, that he was perhaps appointed to show them the better way which they knew not; but it was not till after his thirtieth year that he became fully persuaded that the moment for public action had really come for him.

3. The immediate impulse to enter upon a public career was received from John the Baptist. His relation to John

¹ Luke ii. 52. See Appendix, III. 3.

² John vii. 15. E. Renan speaks wholly without proof when he says, 'Hillel fut le vrai maître de Jésus;' and he contradicts himself when he adds, 's'il est permis de parler de maître quand il s'agit d'une si haute originalité.'—*Vie de Jésus*, p. 35.

³ As E. Renan (*Vie de Jésus*, p. 64) asserts.

is not clear. John was a strict ascetic, a preacher of morals, who required of the people a return to patriarchal righteousness and virtue. John had perceived the ruinous moral effect of a merely external theocratic religiousness. The widespread belief that by mere ceremonial observances sin in the heart could be overcome, was to him an abomination. It was his earnest purpose, in the spirit of the patriarchs and prophets, to reform the old theocratic institution. With this design he introduced a form of purification which was to be applied only under the condition of a previous inward cleansing from sin. Thus outward baptism became his symbol of the birth of the new man by the inward working of repentance. He sought to establish an association of persons sanctified by repentance and self-discipline.¹ This gathering of a society bound together by moral discipline excited the apprehension of Herod Antipas, to whom it seemed to threaten a political national revolution. Josephus does not mention that John had been laid hold of by any Messianic ideas; but the fact that John opposed the theocratic statutes and ceremonial observances, and held that an inward religious and moral renewing was the fundamental condition of national improvement, leads us to conclude that he believed the time promised by the prophets had arrived, in which the Jewish people were to be cleansed of their sins by the baptism of the spirit,² and, like gold and silver in the fire, to be purified for a sacrifice of righteousness.³ That he himself was not the promised Messiah he felt and confessed. That he was to prepare the way of the future deliverer as his forerunner he might consider as possible, since such a harbinger had been predicted by Malachi.⁴ The Baptist remained essentially within the limits of the Old Testament religion of the law. According to the description of him in the gospels, he was a stern ascetic; there was something of monastic gloom in his whole being. His garb, significant of excessive bodily hardening; his more than simple diet; his abode in the wilderness of the Dead Sea, far from human society, separated him completely from Jesus in his mode of thinking and living. A very different spirit animated him. The more surprising, therefore, must it seem

¹ Josephus so represents the nature of John's baptism, *Antiq.* xviii. 5. 2.

² Ezekiel xxxvi. 25.

³ Mal. iii. 2.

⁴ Mal. iii. 1.

that Jesus, just before his public appearance, sought out John and entered into closer intercourse with him.

That Jesus did thus go to John is an undoubted event in the evangelical history.¹ That no permanent connection between the two resulted from this interview is no less certain. Jesus soon withdrew himself again from John. The Baptist did not at any time enter into close connection with Jesus; and even after his death the disciples of John did not cease to form a distinct sect.² Up to the time of his imprisonment John does not appear to have given any particular attention to the work of Jesus; and first, in his prison, not being wholly cut off from communication with the outward world, did he receive intelligence of the important labours of the Nazarene; only then does he appear to have caught the idea that Jesus might be the Messiah whom he had proclaimed to be at hand.³ But the fact that John neither recognised Jesus as the Messiah, nor directed his disciples to him, is a proof that the answer which Jesus then gave to John's disciples convinced neither them nor their master of his Messianic calling.

That there was a different spirit in John from that of Jesus is evident also from the fact that he sought to accomplish the religious and moral renovation of the people in quite a different way. External means of virtue, the practice of fasting especially, he held to be of great importance and conducive to salvation. Jesus, on the contrary, appointed no fasts. The disciples of John sought—probably before the death of their master—to come to an understanding with Jesus on this disputed point, and could not possibly feel themselves flattered by the answer they received. Not only did Jesus liken himself to the bridegroom, and thus indicate a state of high joy which excludes all that is sombre and melancholy, but he referred unmistakably to John as a man trying to sew a new patch into an old garment, and pour new wine into old skins.⁴ The attempt of the Baptist to effect a reformation of the people by severe penances and austere vows of renunciation is represented by Jesus, in plain language, as a method of proceeding *fundamentally wrong*, which could have no effect save to increase the confusion and disorder already existing.

¹ Mark i. 9; Matt. iii. 13; Luke iii. 21; John i. 29. ² Acts xviii. 25; xix. 3.

³ Matt. xi. 2; Luke vii. 18.

⁴ Mark ii. 21; Matt. ix. 16; Luke v. 36.

With all respect for the personal worth of John, Jesus regarded John's enterprise as essentially more hurtful than useful. And the message which John sent from the loneliness of a prison, betraying more of doubt than of faith, appears only to have confirmed Jesus in his judgment. When Jesus pronounced that person blessed who was not offended in him,¹ there can be no doubt, from the connection, that he included John among those who took offence at him. It is true Jesus recognises in John his forerunner,² and so far he acknowledges him as more than an ordinary prophet. He places him at the head of the representatives of the religion of the law, because he approached nearest to the coming salvation. But this position is one of no peculiar merit of John's. One might easily explain it to his disadvantage. So near the light, and yet his eyes closed to its beams; is there not here at least a fault, a lack of spiritual and moral susceptibility? When Jesus declares the least in the kingdom of God to be greater than John,³ is not a sentence of censure passed upon him in these words? Do they not exclude him from the kingdom of God? Not even was he of the number of those from whom the kingdom of Heaven at that time suffered violence, that is, those who sought to enter it, though with all too fierce a zeal;⁴ who although they misunderstood the quiet nature of the kingdom—how like a grain of mustard seed it grew—yet longed for it with the whole heart. Although the judgment of the contemporaries of John, that he was under demoniacal influences,⁵ was unjust—for he asserted deep moral convictions—yet he cannot be regarded as holding rank with the 'children of wisdom,'⁶ for to sew new pieces into old garments, and to put new wine into old skins, is *folly*.

Accordingly it is certain that John and his disciples never at any time joined themselves to Jesus, and equally certain is it that Jesus never looked upon John as one who appreciated him and his purpose. Indeed, Jesus never regarded him as participating in the kingdom of Heaven which he established. On this account the question concerning the actual relation between Jesus and John becomes still more difficult

¹ Matt. xi. 6; Luke vii. 23.

² Matt. xi. 10; xvii. 12; Mark ix. 12; Luke vii. 27; John v. 35.

³ Matt. xi. 11; Luke vii. 28.

⁴ Matt. xi. 12.

⁵ Matt. xi. 18; Luke vii. 33.

⁶ Matt. xi. 19; Luke vii. 35.

and involved. According to the traditionary supposition, the relation of Jesus to the Baptist was altogether different, and the same evangelical records from which we have gathered what we have above stated seem also to favour another conception. This apparently inconsistent fact has its reason. For the later tradition in reference to the relation of Jesus to John was only concerned to represent John as dependent upon Jesus, as forerunner preparing the way before him, and solemnly and publicly testifying to his Messiahship. This representation of John grew out of the position in which the primitive Christian community stood to Judaism. It was not so much by the spirit, words and works of Jesus, as by proving his outward life and history to be in harmony with the Old Testament types and prophecies, that it was hoped to convince the Jews of the truth of Christianity. In this interested aim lay an increasing danger to the truthfulness of evangelical representation, the farther removed the reporters were from the time of the historical occurrences. Hence, the less a report serves this interest, the greater is its credibility, and vice versa. All the accounts which represent John as working apart from Jesus, and give us to understand that Jesus did not count John among his adherents, bear on their face the seal of truth.

That Jesus, before the commencement of his public career, went to John on the banks of the Jordan, and was there baptised by him is certain. But what should have induced Jesus to defer to the authority of the Baptist? This seems strange. With the traditionary representation of the relation of Jesus to John such a subordination does not accord. If Jesus had then a clear consciousness of being the Messiah, the Son of God, how could he submit to a form of purification which exposed him to the suspicion of still needing to be cleansed from sin? It is commonly sought to avoid this difficulty by considering the baptism of Jesus as a consecration to his Messiahship, a solemn act of introduction to his public work of redemption. But the baptism of John had not at all the character of a consecration; it was a symbol of cleansing, and the baptised person, in submitting to this form, gave it to be understood that he had renounced from the heart all impurity of thought and intention. Besides, it does not appear why Jesus stood in need of such a consecration. If he felt himself already consecrated as

the eternal Son of God from heaven, how could he require consecration by a sinful mortal hand? What could a consecration by John, who was less than the least in the kingdom of Heaven, signify to him who was conscious of being the greatest in the kingdom of Heaven? And, in the nature of things, is it not the greater that consecrates the less? Is it not the consecrator that gives and the consecrated that receives? According to the representation of the first Evangelist, John felt the impropriety of his baptising Jesus, and at first refused to do what seemed to him so inconsistent.¹ Beyond question, the first gospel, standing with its report upon the ground of later reflection, tries to explain the inconsistency, while the second and third keep to the simple fact that John baptised Jesus.² According to the account of the first Evangelist, at the repeated desire of Jesus, John *consents* to baptise him, yielding to the explanation of Jesus that he had a *right* to demand to be baptised. But in reality this explanation explains nothing; for how far the baptism of Jesus by John can be called, in a religious or moral sense, a fulfilment of righteousness, is in itself an enigma. The enigma solves itself thus:—

It was a later generation that sought to explain the baptism of Jesus by John—a fact which contradicted the then prevalent ideas of the Messianic dignity of Jesus. It represented his baptism as bound by a *higher necessity* to take place. In what that higher necessity consisted could not be told. Hence we understand why the fourth gospel tells us nothing of the baptism of Jesus by John with water, but only of a baptism of the spirit, of which the Baptist was called to be the witness. From the point of view of the fourth gospel, the fact of a baptism of Jesus by John appeared inexplicable.³ We have now to explain the matter historically.

When Jesus of Nazareth determined to seek out John,⁴ he felt himself first attracted by the earnest appearance of this imposing man; he himself had not then resolved upon independent public action in the service of the kingdom of God. According to the concordant statements of the first three Evangelists, he was baptised by John. After this he withdrew into seclusion; on which account the baptism cannot have been a consecration at the beginning of his

¹ Matt. iii. 14.

² Mark i. 9; Matt. iii. 13; Luke iii. 21.

³ John i. 32.

⁴ Mark i. 9.

public career. Something else must have led him to John than the wish to be inducted into his public sphere. What this motive was is the question. It was at first probably a desire to learn by personal observation the nature of John's work. The preaching of John had produced a peculiar and profound excitement among all classes of the people, from the lowest to the highest. A multitude of common and genteel sinners, seized with sorrow and remorse for their sins, had gathered around him. 'All the people' went out into the desert to the man of iron, clad in the hairy mantle of a prophet. Then probably dawned upon the soul of Jesus that his powers, too, belonged to the *people*. And where could he gain a more thorough insight into the religious and moral condition of the people than with John in the throng now gathered on the else so quiet banks of the Jordan?

Thus the journey of Jesus to John becomes intelligible; but that he mixed with the crowd of *sinners* who had so much to repent of, that he asked like all the rest for baptism, seems inexplicable. According to the fourth gospel, Jesus had been till then unknown to the Baptist; one conversation convinced the latter of the unique moral dignity and purity of Jesus.² For him who had no sin to be cleansed from, baptism could have no significance. If Jesus, nevertheless, desired to be baptised, some objective reasons must have moved him thereto. The third gospel, by a fine allusion, lets us read in the soul of Jesus the real motive of his wishing to be baptised; 'when *all the people* were baptised,' then Jesus also was baptised.³ He would not keep himself apart from the wide-spread spiritual excitement and moral agitation which had taken possession of the whole people, and from which only spiritual pride and self-righteousness kept aloof. Although he could not on his own account enter the ranks of ordinary sinners—albeit he had struggled often and still would have to struggle with temptation—yet he felt himself to be a living member of the body of the people, and it appeared a duty not to be evaded to take part in the earnest emotion which, transient though it was, had been awakened by the warning voice of the Baptist in so many hearts. Even if the baptism of John were 'for the remission of sins'⁴—which representation of it appears to belong

¹ Luke iii. 21.² John i. 33.³ Luke iii. 21.⁴ Mark i. 4.

to the later tradition—it was not, therefore, the sin of individuals only for which forgiveness was offered, but the more conscious the Baptist was of being the forerunner of the future deliverer, the more likely it is that he had in mind the sins of the *whole nation* to which Jesus by his descent belonged, and whose highest and most perfect representative and mediator towards God he was destined to be. As a *humble* member of the people, as one who thought that he ought to consider the sins of all as his own, and the cleansing of all as his own cleansing—as one who could not for a moment separate the cause of the people from his own cause—as such an one he descended into the Jordan and received baptism at the hands of John.

4. Under such circumstances, the sojourn at the Jordan, and especially the moment of the baptism, had a decisive influence upon the further resolutions and steps of Jesus. On this subject the evangelical history gives us significant hints, although the particulars of what took place are wrapt in the veil of fable. According to the fourth gospel, the Messianic destiny of Jesus was revealed to the Baptist by a vision, and he was prompted to bear witness before the people that Jesus was the Messiah.¹ According to the same gospel, the Baptist is said to have at once recognised in Jesus, not merely the Messiah in the general sense of the word, but the suffering Messiah destined to the death of the cross, taking away the sin of the world. In these statements the unmistakable aim of a later tradition appears, in placing John as near as possible to Jesus. But there is not the slightest probability that the Baptist ever distinctly recognised the Messianic destiny of Jesus, far less that he bore full testimony before the whole people to the divine sonship. Just as little ground is there for supposing that it had been revealed to him in a vision, even as early as at the baptism, that Jesus was the Messiah. As he had not known Jesus before the baptism,² such a vision could have been accorded to him only by means wholly supernatural. In this case his testimony could have had no personal value, as it did not rest upon personal experience; and indeed, after this alleged testimony to the divine sonship of Jesus, John still continued to be less than the least in the kingdom of Heaven.

¹ John i. 32.

² John i. 33.

The account of the fourth gospel can, therefore, lay no claim to historical credibility in the usual sense of the word. History, in the fourth gospel, is but a form of expression for its ruling ideas. The account given of the homage paid by John to Jesus, in consequence of a higher revelation, is intended to show forth the transcendent glory of Jesus, before which the last and noblest manifestation of the Old Testament religion of law, as represented by John, fades away. John, in contradiction of his own peculiar calling, and while exercising it, has to testify that no traditional human forms and penances, but only a divine self-sacrificing love, could deliver humanity. This conception of the fourth gospel agrees perfectly with its representation of the ultimate result which John and Jesus were striving for. In the light of this gospel the last shadows of the Old Covenant, still cast by John, entirely fade away.

But the actual relation between John and Jesus was a different one; and not in the fourth gospel, but in the first three, especially in the second, is it most correctly represented.

During his stay in the desert of the Jordan, under the impressions made on him by the Baptist, and after being baptised, the conviction arose with ever-growing clearness in the mind of Jesus that the *way of the law* could no longer be the *way of salvation* for his people. There, at the Jordan, he saw, in spirit, heaven open; there he felt mightily the presence of the Father; there he heard the voice of God declaring the divine pleasure in him as the beloved son.¹ There, for the first time, he saw clearly and surely that the sin-burdened people could not attain to truth and peace by the path taken by John. There his steps parted for ever from the Baptist's. The opened Heaven was the symbol of the reconciliation offered by God to man. At the Jordan it became plain to Jesus that his people could attain to inward peace only by reconciliation with God. According to the tradition, the spirit is said to have descended upon him in the form of a dove. At the Jordan Jesus saw that only the tender gentle spirit of humility and love, of which the dove is the symbol, could effect a moral renovation of the people. A voice from heaven is said to have assured

¹ Mark i. 10; Matt. iii. 16; Luke iii. 21.

him of the divine approbation. At the Jordan, for the first time, he recognised it as the will of God that he was called, in this spirit, for the work of reconciling and regenerating his country. As a flash of light from above, this illumination came to him,¹ while the Baptist, although he looked for the future Messiah, was not able to recognise the present one as the man of divine promise. For that the Baptist's expectations of a Messiah differed from the national-theocratic expectations only in the moral earnestness with which he cherished them, is evident from the peculiarity of his course, and from the subsequent judgment pronounced upon him by Jesus. As he did not find in Jesus the realisation of his ideal of the Messiah, he never joined Jesus; and his disciples, after his death, continued to look for him who was to come.²

While Jesus went to the desert, drawn thither at the first by the powerful personality of the last of the Old Testament prophets, breathing the spirit of Elias, he was there impressed by the great religious-moral movement which agitated all classes of the population. For the first time, the spectacle of the wretchedness and misery of the people of his day was laid bare before his eyes; in sympathy with them he went down into the purifying stream from which they hoped to receive the power of regeneration. But it was through his intercourse with the last prophet of the law that he came to a clear consciousness of the difference between himself and even this purest and noblest manifestation of the old religion; and, like light from above, it flashed upon his soul that only from this source—namely, the immediate consciousness of God, and the tenderest love for man—could new life stream into his people. Thus, in his very first contact in the wilderness of Jordan with the people hungering for spiritual life, there unfolds itself within him, as the innermost germ of his character, that *tender holy humility* which does not separate itself in intellectual pride and self-righteousness from the masses, but, lovingly sympathising with them, takes upon itself and bears the suffering of the people, their sin and its consequences.

By intercourse with John and his followers, however, Jesus did not attain to a consciousness of his Messianic destiny.

¹ Mark i. 10.

² Acts xix. 4.

He gained indeed the conviction that the theocracy was no longer equal to the work of regenerating the Israelitish people, and that *a new act of God* was necessary to their renovation. That he was to be the instrument thereof he had as yet only a *presentiment*, but at no decisive conclusion had he yet arrived. The evangelical narrative, with a manifest anachronism, places at the commencement of the public career of Jesus what came to maturity only at a later period. And to do this it is obliged to have recourse to the supernatural, and to represent as brought about by a miracle, either outwardly, in the presence of the multitude, or inwardly, in the consciousness of the Baptist, what could not have taken place in the process of spiritual growth, or according to the laws of historical probability. If things really happened as they are stated, then would the character of Jesus be removed out of the limits of human development into the region of the supernatural, and he himself become inexplicable. But it is precisely the events that now follow which show clearly how far Jesus was, during his sojourn with John, from having arrived at any firm determination in relation to his future public action.¹

¹ On the relation of John to Jesus, see Appendix, III. 4.

CHAPTER IV.

THE RESOLVE UPON PUBLIC ACTIVITY.

1. THE first three gospels agree in stating that, after receiving the baptism of John, Jesus, under a special influence of the Spirit from above, went into the 'wilderness.' There is no reason to doubt this fact: the silence of the fourth gospel upon it is owing to the lofty representation of Jesus which this gospel aims to give. If Jesus were the bodily manifestation of the divine Logos itself, as the fourth gospel assumes, he could have needed no special preparation before entering upon his public career, still less could he have been exposed to temptations and to inner conflicts. The second gospel gives the facts in the simplest form, when it tells us that, after his baptism, Jesus was driven by the Spirit into the wilderness.¹ The powerful impression made upon him by the contact into which he had been brought with the people at the Jordan, penitent and longing for a renewing of life, had not yet led him to a final decision. He had a general idea of what he ought to do, but how to carry it out was not yet clear to him; he had to be the true guide of the people, oppressed by sin and want, so as to meet their highest need in a way true and satisfying for all time. He was to fulfil the gracious purposes of God towards his people by a path in which no one had preceded him: by all-pitying love, and humble, willing sacrifice. The day of theocratic tutelage had gone by; 'the law and the prophets' no longer sufficed; the traditional statute had become a spirit-killing letter. The hammer of repentance swung by the Baptist could break hearts, but not heal them. What a task was it just at that moment to utter the decisive word, to take the first pioneer step from the dead formulas of the past towards building up a new future, full of life and hope! How natural was the

¹ Mark i. 12.

ebb and flow of thought and feeling in that pure soul, glowing with love to God and his people! How inevitable were those anxious hours, when the call for help, to which there were none willing or able to respond, came to this lowly spirit with ever-increasing urgency! Could he in such a state of mind return to the confinement of his humble home, to the restraints of the trade which he had learned, to brothers and sisters who had derided him as the 'dreamer,' the 'enthusiast?' Could he consent again to take part in the routine of the work-day world at a moment when it was only by still communion with his God and Father that he could receive the true answer to all his questionings, and be directed aright as to his future course? Already at the Jordan he had received a testimony from his heavenly Father; Heaven had opened to him; he had felt the breath of the Divine Spirit; he had become conscious of intimate fellowship with God. To be alone now with his heavenly Father was felt by him as an irrepressible want; far from the throngs that he had so lately been among, he longed to examine and prepare himself in solitude, to collect all his powers for the final resolution.

These historical features, essential to a correct delineation of the character of Jesus, the older tradition has already fabulously amplified and marvellously embellished. Satan, the wild beasts, the angels of the second gospel,¹ carry fable back to its first and simplest elements. Jesus, as the second Adam, appears during his sojourn in the wilderness to the later Christian community as the counterpart of the first Adam during his sojourn in Paradise.² In the wilderness as in Paradise, Satan is the tempter; in Paradise the brute world is yet tame and subject to man; in the wilderness the beasts are wild but submissive to Jesus; in Paradise, after the fall, the angel is a persecutor of man; in the wilderness, after Satan is vanquished, the angels are the willing servants of man. The later tradition added the forty days' fast, the conversation between Jesus and the tempter, and the three several temptations representing the essential forms of all temptations which Jesus had to withstand during his public career.

2. In the solitude of the desert, in prayer and in com-

¹ Mark i. 13.

² Compare the parallel between the first and second Adam, Rom. v. 12.

munings with his heavenly Father, he considered the decision which he had to make. That he meditated on it deeply, and that the severest inward conflicts rose up in his soul, is genuinely human and perfectly worthy of a high moral character. The 'Satan' who, according to the evangelical account, confronted him as tempter, is the 'adversary' of the Old Covenant, the symbolical representative, first (viz. in the Book of Job) of the powers hostile to *man*—according to later representation, hostile to *God* also. Love to God and the brethren was the moving power in the soul of Jesus. To bring help to his poor suffering people he had recognised at the Jordan as an urgent task; but upon more mature consideration what difficulties lay in the way of its execution! Thoughtless, passionately excited minds, throw themselves without reflection into the greatest dangers; vanity and pride, ambition and love of praise, the greed of gain, and the craving for power, goad them unconsciously on; they lack the self-control needed to restrain the demons of passion. The history of the Jewish demagogues of that period—the account, for example, of the revolt of Judas the Gaulonite, against the oppressive taxation of the Roman government, under the pretext that the Jews owed tribute to God alone,¹ the fitful bloody outbreaks of the people which only led to still worse oppression, to a still more hopeless degradation of the masses—afford us a melancholy insight into the politico-theocratic delusion of even the better men of that time. The *humble* Nazarene, with the mild pure spirit, full of truth and love, soon recognised such illusions of the 'spirit from below' for what they were. He, too, heard in his solitude the voice of the oppressed inviting him to plunge into the whirlpool of popular commotion, to despise opposing dangers, and boldly to defy all threatening obstacles. But such was only a voice of Satan, a voice of the tempter which he must resist, which he must silence in still self-possession, in prayer and communion with God, in obedient subjection to the holy will of the Father, for in Satan's way the suffering people could not be helped. *Self-denial and self-control, disregard for self-advantage, renunciation of power, honour and self-gratification*, these were the first demands which the Spirit from above made upon him. In the three different temptations men-

¹ Josephus, *Ant.* xviii. 1, 1 and 6. Consult Ewald's *History of Christ*, 2nd ed. p. 18.

tioned, which sought to induce Jesus to procure by supernatural means bread, honour and power, the evangelical tradition has indicated the moral dangers which from the first lay in his path. Certainly the higher the endowment, the greater the temptation in every man.

As Jesus is commonly represented, it is very difficult to conceive of him in conflict with temptation. The fourth gospel is silent in regard to such a struggle, and the doctrine of the Church has placed itself on the side of the fourth gospel; but, if anywhere, it is here that the representation of the first three gospels deserves the preference. That the tradition of the temptation, which already in the second half of the first century harmonized so little with the orthodoxy of that period, and with which much that is told of Jesus even in the first three gospels is not easily to be reconciled, should be a pure invention, is altogether impossible. From the circumstance that 'Satan' is designated as the tempter of Jesus in the wilderness, we are led to infer that violent struggles, as Jesus himself may have told his disciples, preceded the first decisions. If we cannot bring ourselves to believe that such conflicts and struggles took place within the Redeemer, we are compelled, apart from the romantic representation of a personal bodily interview of Satan with the Saviour of the world, to divest the temptation of all moral worth. If the motions of the will which might lead to wrong decisions, to false steps and ways, could not arise in the soul of Jesus, then was he never really tempted; but then in this case the account of the temptation becomes far worse than a myth—a senseless fable, out of harmony with history.

3. In three points especially there comes to light, in the account of the temptation, a genuinely historical trait. First, there was stirring in Jesus, during his seclusion, that mysterious power which we must needs regard as the source of his wonder-working. According to popular notions, he must have wrought wonders without interruption from his birth, and the apocryphal gospels, therefore, with their romantic stories of the miracles of his childhood, are but the suitable expressions of the later ideas of the Church. According to the first three gospels, the wonder-working power of Jesus is an effect of the Spirit, which since the baptism at the Jordan dwelt in him in its fulness. Without doubt a

deeper consciousness of his spiritual endowment, and of his moral mission, first awoke in his soul at the Jordan. In the solitude of the desert, after he had received baptism, it must have become his full conviction that his influence upon the people had to be of an infinitely higher kind than that of the Baptist—that he had to lead them on to a new future. But the forming of such a conviction was possible only through temptation. To use, without due consideration, the power of which he had become conscious, and which could so easily sway nature and men—to devote his rich gifts to the service of self, to the lust of possession, honour, and power; in a word, to deviate into the false path of Judas the Gaulonite—was the rock on which then Jesus might still have struck.

In another point also a mark of deep historical truth comes out in the account of the temptation. How easily might such dangers as are connected with every movement against existing theocratic institutions, from the first, have kept back Jesus from the attempt to work a public reformation! Doubtless he well weighed these dangers and measured their extent. But, according to the account of the temptation, they became no snares to him. He did not allow them to turn him from the course which he had been impelled by the Spirit to enter. They rather preserved his glowing zeal from rashness.

In that with passages from the Old Testament he suppressed the motions of temptation, we have a third trait of an unquestionably historical character in the narrative. It was just at the moment of preparation and self-consecration that he must have felt most strongly the need of having recourse to the sacred writings of the fathers. We venture to assert that these became a *temptation* to him. For do we not find two directly conflicting modes of representation in these writings? On the one hand the people of Israel and their future deliverer are glorified, on the other hand humiliated. The people earning their bread by labour, yet, through Almighty Providence, miraculously fed.¹ Under the Old Covenant the pious man may rest assured that, according to the gracious will of God, guardian angels protect him in all his ways, but he must beware how he tempts God.² To the righteous (Abraham for example) the nations

¹ Deut. viii. 3.

² Ps. xci. 2; Deut. vi. 16.

are promised as an inheritance, but yet he must be humble before God as one who has nothing to hope for.¹ Thus the Scripture seems to stand in contradiction to itself.

And there were still more exciting considerations, still more anxious doubts to be solved in the mind of Jesus, than those which the account of the temptation indicates by means of scriptural passages grouped together. Was not Moses appointed by God as the mediator of his covenant-people? Was not the theocratic law, as well as the temple services and sacrifices, given by God's command? Was not a chosen priesthood divinely instituted for Israel? Was it not with the observance of the law that the promise of salvation and life was connected? Was not the promised deliverer described in the Holy Scriptures as a royal hero, a restorer of the power and splendour of the house and kingdom of David, as a politico-national conqueror, victorious in battles?

As these things passed through the mind of Jesus, not only were there inner conflicts to overcome, but he felt the necessity of coming to a clear understanding of the whole traditional conception and explanation of the holy writings, and of taking up a fundamentally firm position towards scribedom and the ruling Jewish schools. There was no alternative but to break inwardly with the theocracy, to arm himself for a life and death struggle with the bearers of power, the slaves of popular favour, and—what to a *humble, pure* soul like that of the Saviour was perhaps the most difficult part—to wear the *appearance* of crime, the *suspicion* of a deadly and death-bringing disobedience against ecclesiastical and civil authority. On the one side was the alluring prospect of the brilliant results of a prosperous career: gold, honour, power; on the other hand the threatened destruction of a life publicly branded with Cain's mark of crime: privation, shame, death.

In the solitude of the wilderness Jesus made the decision, and conquered the temptation. How long the conflict lasted is not known; certainly not longer than is stated by the round number forty days. But that he was entirely separated from the surrounding world during his abode in the desert is not likely. It is equally improbable that he abstained during that time from all nourishment. Only when

¹ Gen. xvii. 6; Deut. vi. 13.

full clearness was vouchsafed to him regarding the choice of his calling, did he return to his ordinary sphere. In the main, the strength of the temptation was conquered for ever. That temptation returned in individual cases and ceased only with his life, the third gospel intimates when it says the adversary left him *for a season*,¹ which is likewise a genuine historical feature.

4. It is not likely that Jesus entered upon his public activity immediately upon the termination of those inner conflicts.² A particular event, the imprisonment of the Baptist, seems first to have determined him.³ The last worthy representative of the religion of the law was put out of the way; the last courageous voice against the general moral decay an act of royal violence had silenced in blood. Now was the time for Jesus to lift up *his* voice. It is significant that he began his public work just at the moment when the fate of the Baptist had shown how perilous it was to speak the truth. He *dared* not longer be silent. But what was it that he had in those days of conflict and preparation recognised as his life's work?

The first three gospels agree that his public work began with the announcement of the gospel; according to the second,⁴ which here reports most exactly, there were four points to which the first proclamation of Jesus had reference. First, that now the fulfilment of time had come; second, the advent of the kingdom of God; third, the call to a change of heart; fourth, the demand for faith.

It is strikingly characteristic of the career of Jesus, that he began it with public preaching. His work rested therefore wholly and essentially upon the basis of *spiritual freedom*; to the *conviction* of the people of his time and country Jesus, above all, addressed himself. It might seem as if in this he only intended to follow the example of the Baptist. But keen eyes discerned at the first glance the essential difference of his work from that of the Baptist. Unlike the Baptist, he represented himself not as one concluding an era, but as one with whom begins a *new* future, full of hope. 'The time is fulfilled,' i.e. the *old* time of the theocratic reign of law, of ceremonial tutelage, and of the statute's

¹ Luke iv. 13; compare with Luke xxii. 28.

² Mark i. 14; Matt. iv. 12.

³ Mark vi. 17; Matt. xiv. 3; Luke iii. 15; Jos. *Ant.* xviii. v. 2.

⁴ Mark i. 15.

dominion over the religious and moral spirit of the people. That this old time terminated with the Baptist, Jesus had already felt at the Jordan, in the morning splendour of a higher illumination. Although he recognised and declared himself to be the bearer and representative of a new era, he certainly had not arrived at the consciousness of being the *Messiah of the Jews*. Conscious was he of being a man anointed with the Spirit of God, entrusted with a mission to regenerate his people, endowed with the power of bringing them into fellowship with God. To his own nation first of all his labours belonged. Therefore he spoke of the 'nearness or coming of the kingdom of God.' The idea of the kingdom of God was not in itself new; the Old Testament theocracy claimed to represent this kingdom in living reality—a kingdom in which God himself reigned in present power and glory, the Holy One in Heaven over his sanctified people on earth.¹ The declaration of Jesus concerning the Baptist, that the least in the kingdom of Heaven was greater than he, shows obviously how little Jesus saw, in the Old Testament theocracy, the true appearance of the kingdom of God upon earth. The opinion of his contemporaries in this respect was, in the eyes of Jesus, an error and illusion. According to his conviction, the kingdom of God still waited for its realization on earth, and that he himself was to bring this about, in a sense not yet fulfilled, had become to him a certainty. 'Change of heart' and 'faith' he set forth as the two indispensable conditions of participation in this kingdom. The Baptist had demanded the first, but in the form of an external obedience to the moral law—a deadening asceticism. This moral one-sidedness of the Baptist had its root in a religious defect. He was wanting in a deeper consciousness of God; he had not recognised God as the 'Father' of men—as the eternal, holy, pitying Love. That the customary means of expiation, the sacrificial forms of the theocracy were not sufficient to bring to the people a renewal of God's good pleasure, John clearly saw. Greater efforts, more earnest moral works were necessary, in his eyes, to appease the righteous wrath of God; in sincere contrition the people were to prostrate themselves before the throne of God, and thus to acquire for themselves a position well-pleasing in His

¹ Exod. xix. 5.

sight. To the Baptist God still appeared chiefly as Law-giver and Judge. Jesus, on the contrary, was above all things conscious of God as *his* Father,¹ and thus also as the *Father of his people*. In this consciousness he had already at the Jordan seen Heaven open, while to the Baptist it was closed. The Spirit of the Father had descended upon him from above as an indissoluble bond of union between him and the Eternal, and in the storms and conflicts of temptation heavenly messengers had not ceased to serve him; intercourse between his spirit and the invisible world was never for a moment interrupted.²

It was therefore a change of heart of an entirely new character that Jesus demanded. As by the life of the 'Spirit,' that inner life in the depths of man's personality which has its ground in immediate connection with God, he had been moved and determined to work for the regeneration of his people, so his whole activity was concentrated upon the 'Spirit,' that personal, central point of man. Consequently, from the beginning of his work to its conclusion, no trace is discernible in him of deliberate calculation, of artificial methods, of clever reflection, or of abstract school-ideas. All is original, spiritually alive, vigorous in thought and deed. Change of the *inmost disposition*, not merely of the outward conduct of life, he recognised as the ultimate aim of all lasting personal regeneration. Out of the old man he would form a new man; in the place of servitude to the natural inclinations he would establish the reign of the Spirit; instead of dependence upon the letter which kills, liberty in the service of truth; instead of a life of appearance, a life in the eternal reality of things. He went at once to the very depth; nothing less than the highest did he demand; he insisted upon a life renewed from the centre. This fundamental trait characterizes his whole gospel. There was a special appropriateness in the announcement of 'glad good news,'³ with which he began his career. This designation pointedly expressed the new, peculiar, unique character of his work, in relation not only to the Old Testament theocracy, but also to the labours of the Baptist. He had himself come forth from the conflicts with temptation, with a

¹ Mark i. 11.

² Mark i. 13, which account is to be decidedly preferred to that in Matt. iv. 11.

³ Mark i. 15; Matt. iv. 23.

mind made glad and penetrated with the consciousness that from him was to proceed a new spiritual age, a divine recreation of the nations and of human life. To the Heaven now always open, to the unsealed fountains of the Eternal Spirit, to uninterrupted communion between the world above and the world below, he directed all who would hearken to him. The watchword upon his lips was not bondage, but liberty; not sorrow, but joy; not division, but reconciliation; not death, but life eternal.

But at the very beginning of his career, with the call for a change of heart he united the demand for faith. 'Trust in God' had already been enjoined in the sacred books of the Old Covenant in the most impressive manner, and commended in the loftiest terms; but the 'faith' which Jesus made the condition of entrance into the kingdom of God was something far higher. The objects of that Old Testament trust were principally the historic promises of salvation, the expectations of the future of Israel. Whatever of want and tribulation might break in upon the nation, the pious Israelite was never to cease hoping and waiting for the salvation¹ that was coming from the Lord. But it was not chiefly of the future that Jesus spoke. All whom he invited were to have faith in a present salvation which was just entering, which all should experience. It was not (according to the first three gospels) *his person* which he put up as the highest and last object of the faith which he demanded—it was not even *the Father* in Heaven. In the *gospel actually present* Israel was to believe.² Faith was to be placed in the glad news that Heaven was now really open to all; that now the Spirit from above had actually descended; that communion with God was now really restored; that a *new Israel* was now coming into existence. To this announcement the people were to open ear and heart. They were willingly to acknowledge the new salvation which should become the foundation of future glorious developments and blessings, and to rejoice in it with undisturbed joy. *This glad childlike untroubled devotion to the creation of the Spirit from above* Jesus named 'Faith.' Thus he regarded as faith the *new state of mind in the individual* from which the kingdom of God was to rear itself as a living structure.

¹ Isaiah xxviii. 16.

² Mark i. 15. The second Evangelist has the most original account.

This kingdom being placed upon the basis of a change of heart and of faith received thus the seal of an inner kingdom, *a kingdom of the Eternal Spirit*, independent of the powers of this world. To be the herald of such a kingdom of God was the calling originally chosen by Jesus as the result of earnest examination and severe conflicts. He had publicly come forth, not yet as the Messiah promised by the prophets, but as the founder of a new era, of a new fellowship of pious Israelites with God, independent of theocratic conditions. The thought had not yet come to him, still less had he formed a plan to extend his sphere of action beyond the boundaries of Israel. To rescue a small community of God out of the great political confusion and moral disorder into which his countrymen, mostly through their own fault, had been thrown, to plant in this little community the life of the Spirit which is from God, to foster and promote this life in it, was at the beginning of his public life the aim to which he considered himself immediately called.¹

¹ See Appendix, III. 5.

CHAPTER V.

THE CALLING OF DISCIPLES; AND FIRST RESULTS.

1. THE first public activity of Jesus, then, was directed to the founding of the kingdom of God in Israel; his desire was to gather a community of true Israelites. To this end there was needed above all things a strong nucleus of men of a kindred spirit to his own, who would stand by him as helpers and fellow-labourers, upon whom he could implicitly rely, and who would render him a hearty support in his endeavours. He sought and found them, not among the scribes or the cultivated and upper classes. As he had himself come forth from the people, so it appeared to him that the persons best fitted to help on the renovation of Israel which he had begun were men of the people—simple, unschooled, unspoiled by the narrow and artificial culture of the time. It was upon small circles of the middle orders of the people, in the north of the province of Galilee, around the lake of Gennesaret, that he first sought to work. That region was mostly inhabited by families who supported themselves by fishing. It was among these people that his ideas and teachings found a surprisingly favourable reception. Under the influence of delightful natural scenery and a mild sky—in the shade of the palm, the vine, the olive and the fig-tree—the people, with simple manners and moderate demands upon the enjoyments of life, appeared to have remained more child-like; the air in that mountainous country was more pure, the water clear, the lake mostly peaceful, inviting to dreamy meditation. This region Jesus made the centre of his activity. He left Nazareth, where, perhaps, his humble birth was an obstacle to success,¹ and took up his abode at Capernaum on the western shore of the lake. Here his first pupils joined him. As he did not commence his public career until after

¹ Mark ii. 1; vi. 3; Matt. ix. 1; xiii. 54; Luke iv. 24.

ground which determined their activity; they were thenceforth to put themselves under the higher authority of God; they were to be ready at any moment to separate themselves even from their nearest family connections. But it was a *perfectly free* obedience that Jesus demanded. He did not overpower his young friends by the enticing art of persuasion, nor with signs and wonders. He only indicated with striking brevity the higher calling for which he had chosen them: 'I will make you fishers of men.'¹ He compared his gospel to a net thrown out, first among the people of Israel; he does not expect to win all; only one draught, one 'gathering, one election,' was to be made. Without using arts or force, only by the free influence of the word of truth and the spirit of love, were men to be allured by them into the net of the kingdom of God. In what calm greatness does the character of Jesus appear in gathering this first circle of disciples, only four in number!

How insignificant this beginning, measured by human standards; but how pure, how free from all alloy of selfishness, ambition, or lust of power! The word of truth takes hold of simple, childlike, unperverted, truth-loving natures; it acts upon them immediately. Upon this rests the secret of the boundless influence of Christianity. But how difficult it is for the human understanding to comprehend this, is shown by the way in which the later evangelical tradition represents the calling of the first disciples.² While that which was extraordinary in the influence of Jesus over those whom he called consisted in his laying hold of and chaining their minds *by his word*, it was, according to the later tradition, not his word but a miracle which won for him his first disciples. He is there represented as having induced them to cast out their nets for a draught, which resulted in their obtaining an innumerable quantity of fishes by means of a supernatural influence, whereat Peter and they that were with him were first thrown into a state of great excitement; but at the word of the Lord that they should henceforth be fishers of men, they joined themselves to him with James and John. In this connection the word that kindled their hearts loses all true value; instead of being the germ of the call, it would be only the outer shell; not a moral awakening,

¹ Mark i. 17; Matt. iv. 19.

² Luke v. 1-11.

but a magical surprise, in this case, would have drawn the disciples to Jesus. The narrative of the miraculous draught starts from a point of view which plainly betrays its later origin. That full draught which, by the number of fishes taken, made the boat in danger of sinking,¹ had a deeper significance at a time when the fulness of the Gentiles was being gathered in by the net of the gospel; but it had not that significance when Jesus first appeared at the lake of Gennesaret as a public teacher with only four disciples. This narrative seems to represent the spread of the gospel in the heathen world.

In order rightly to appreciate the work of Jesus from its beginning, it must not be overlooked that he won his first successes *by the word*, that word which liberates men from the bondage of the letter and the statute, by the word of faith in the eternal kingdom of the Spirit, and its victory in the life of the people. The later tradition, evidently, no longer clearly recognized this meaning of the word of Jesus. According to the fourth gospel, Jesus began his career in Galilee with a most astonishing miracle, the changing of water at Cana,² in order to reveal thereby to the people his Divine glory. It was in conformity with the ideas of the person of Jesus entertained at a later period, to think of his career as beginning thus, but such a beginning did not lie in the spirit and character of Jesus. By a miracle, such as is related in the fourth gospel,³ he might have excited astonishment and tumultuous admiration, but he would hardly have opened and won the hearts of men for the hidden kingdom of the Spirit, which germinates and grows in stillness.

At the first, Jesus entered upon his labours as a teacher among small circles of friends only. Strengthened by the two pairs of brothers, he commenced his public work in the synagogue at Capernaum. There were valid reasons why he held aloof from the temple service and joined that of the synagogue. The temple worship was the central pulsation of the theocracy; the synagogue had in it the elements of a reform of Judaism. As it had its origin in a time of national suffering and exile, its discourses, its prayers and hymns kept the people in remembrance that God seeks to be called upon in the time of trouble. In the synagogue the congregation was represented, and took an active part in the service.

¹ Luke v. 7.² John ii. 11.³ John ii. 1.

A council of elders presided, and it became the model for the constitution of the Christian Church. The synagogue gave Jesus the opportunity of working, not only upon the congregation, but upon the official circle of Judaism also. He did not appear in the synagogue at Capernaum as the Messiah, nor as an officer of the synagogue, but as a teacher of the law (Rabbi) and free expounder of the Holy Scriptures of the Old Covenant. The difference between his manner of teaching and the method of the doctors of the schools made itself at once observable to all. He taught 'as one having authority,'¹ not merely as a gifted speaker glowing with the artificial fire of rhetoric, but as one having in himself the consciousness that his mission and qualification were not from men, but from God. Hence, the astonishment which took hold of his hearers at his first discourse was not overpowering and benumbing, but glad and vivifying, for there flowed in his words the power of the Spirit of God, and the breath of a new era made itself felt in the whole assembly.

3. On that Sabbath on which Jesus, in the synagogue at Capernaum, began his career as teacher, an incident occurred which throws a significant light upon the peculiarity of his work and character. Among his hearers was a man whose mind was diseased—for such is to be understood by 'the man with an unclean spirit,'² whom the demon 'threw in the midst.'³ This person, it would seem, was suffering from religious mania. Greatly excited by the discourse of Jesus, he looked upon him as a higher being of a dangerous kind, and it was this insane fancy that induced Jesus to enter into closer contact with him. Jesus succeeded in tranquillizing and healing him. The impression produced by *this act* deepened in all present the effect of *his word*.

It is not to be questioned that we here confront an enigmatical aspect of the public activity of Jesus. In the synagogue at Capernaum he wrought the first miracle; but the miracles which the gospels ascribe to Jesus place the evangelical history, in the eyes of many, in a dubious and uncertain light. There is a theory of the 'miracle' which, when applied to Jesus, renders an historical representation of his character impossible. If, for example, we consider the wonder-working power of Jesus as an efflux of Almighty power

¹ Mark i. 22; Luke iv. 32.

² Mark i. 26.

³ Luke iv. 35.

dwelling in him, or as a beaming forth of his 'Divine nature,' then by no human standard is his working to be measured; and then there is really only one circumstance miraculous, which is that side by side with the working of miracles he was likewise wholly natural, and bore himself like any other man, as within the limits prescribed by natural laws. Hence, from an historical point of view, the wonder-working power of Jesus can be taken into account only in so far as it admits of being apprehended as a *truly human* gift. Were he possessed of a power or gift which was in contradiction with natural human power, then we must give up the possibility of representing him to ourselves. It is, therefore, as a natural human gift that we regard this power, however highly exalted it was in him.

That upon his first public appearance in the synagogue at Capernaum he tranquillized and healed, in a way that astonished all present, a person mentally diseased, is not to be doubted. He must consequently have been endowed with an extraordinary ability to influence beneficently persons of this description, and to free them from their sufferings, as is shown in other similar instances. Even if the results produced have been exaggerated by tradition, and though, according to an opinion universally prevalent among the Jews, diseases of the mind, insanity, epilepsy and the like, were attributed to demoniacal possession, or supernatural indwelling of evil spirits, yet the fact remains unshaken that Jesus cured a large number of persons so afflicted. What he thought about the popular ideas of his time concerning possession cannot now be determined.¹ Undoubtedly he did not consider it his task to correct this superstition. The work to which he was called was a different one: to help the suffering portion of his people, to renew them in mind and heart, was his mission, and this he fulfilled in Capernaum. Insanity is one of the most fearful disorders of the human personality. That it was so regarded is expressed in the popular belief that it was caused by an immediate influence from an invisible world of malignant spirits. Jesus himself, perfectly sound in body and mind, was conscious of power to combat this disorder, and liberate diseased minds from their chains. This work of liberation lay the more in his sphere of action, as the striking frequency of mental disorders at

¹ See Appendix, Ill. 8.

that period was closely connected with the peculiar state of the times. Insanity is always a concomitant of great popular excitements, startling events, and revolutionary commotions. In the ordinary course of human affairs the equilibrium of spiritual and moral life is in much less danger of being lost than in seasons of excitement and revolution, when the old and the new, as yet unadjusted, are in a state of wild ferment contending for settlement. The disturbed condition of the religious and social relations of that time will explain to us the numerous cases of mental disease, which the first three gospels report as cases of 'possession.' Hence the extraordinary interest which these unfortunate ones showed in the person of Jesus. Hence the earnest and effective sympathy which he showed them.

4. But how was it that Jesus healed the maniac in the synagogue at Capernaum? We have no evidence that the man was permanently cured. Jesus, however, as the narrative states, stayed, *by his word*, the paroxysm which seized the man in the assembly, by an influence purely spiritual and moral; for the Evangelist attributes the result to the word, to the 'new teaching.'¹ Not as a magician does Jesus appear, exorcising evil spirits by a formula of adjuration, but as a mighty teacher of the truth who has found the word that frees mankind spiritually and morally—the word that puts right disordered minds, makes sound again diseased souls. A conviction flashes upon the assembly: this is the man who can remedy the disorder and the suffering of the people.

In the house of Simon, whither Jesus went from the synagogue, a second occasion offered itself for proving his power of healing, on the mother-in-law of Simon. The later accounts represent her as *very* sick, which severity is not mentioned in the second gospel.² In this instance, likewise, it was the tranquillizing influence of the personal presence of Jesus, his taking the sick woman kindly by the hand, probably with consoling and cheering words, whereby she was made well. A more or less similar moral power over those whose nervous system is in a disturbed state is possessed by everyone. A person nervously excited, excites still more others who are in a similar condition, while one who is spiritually

¹ Mark i. 27.

² Matt. viii. 14; Luke iv. 38; Mark i. 30.

and morally sound possesses in himself a power by which he creates in others a sense of returning health. There are persons in whose society we feel uncomfortable, physically unwell, whose presence affects and disturbs us. On the other hand, there are those whose presence enlivens us and exhilarates the whole nervous system. Such influences do not admit of being explained by any ordinary 'physical' laws: they have a *psychological* or spiritual character. The inner sphere of the human spirit is wondrous, unfathomable; in its normal and eternal essence it is altogether incomprehensible. A depth, partly hidden to the man himself, exists in the centre of every human life. Who can say: 'I have fathomed myself to the very inmost of my being; I know how to trace back all my thoughts, volitions, actions to their ultimate causes, or to forecast them for future years; I am to myself perfectly clear; I have comprehended myself fully?' Self-knowledge is indeed a duty, but we can never wholly compass it. In view of such considerations, it is not irreconcilable with the nature of the human spirit that Jesus, by his spiritual power, produced on other minds effects which manifested themselves physically; effects that, measured by the usual standards, seemed inexplicable. Modern psychology, the more clearly it recognizes the intimate union of the material and immaterial in man, will be the less disposed to account such effects impossible. We must take care, however, not to consider them unlimited, or place them on a level with the effects of Divine Omnipotence. They are, after all, only effects produced by the personal human spirit, effects that, like all proceeding from that source, require a moral medium, presuppose a corresponding susceptibility in those upon whom they are wrought, and are limited in extent. If the maniac was to be healed, it was necessary that he should see in the person of Jesus one who was armed with power from above, and that he should submit himself to his authority. If the mother-in-law of Simon was to be loosed from her fever, she had heartily to confide in Jesus, and reliantly raise herself up by his hand. And not at all times, not in every place, not in regard to every person, did Jesus feel in himself the same assurance and power to tranquillize and heal.¹ A reciprocal spiritual and moral activity was the indispensable condition of every healing.

¹ Compare Mark vi. 5; Matt. xii. 38.

But it was not from this unprejudiced point of view that both these cures were regarded by the people of Capernaum, among whom the rumour of them spread with lightning rapidity. The bulk of the multitude saw in Jesus chiefly the wonder-working man, who in his conflict with the hostile powers of the demon world had been victorious. A few hours after these occurrences, towards sunset, there arose an extraordinary stir among the people, it being the Sabbath and they unemployed. Numerous sick persons, whose state of health permitted it, were brought to Jesus at the house of Simon, whose door was, as it were, besieged. A considerable number of these seem to have been mentally diseased. That Jesus cured 'all' that were brought unto him is the statement of the later tradition; an earlier account states only that 'many' were healed;¹ a significant fact tending to confirm the idea that the healing of the sick depended upon their spiritual and moral susceptibility, and that only such diseases were curable by Jesus, the essential cause of which lay in the disturbance of the organs of the mind, and upon which, therefore, according to the nature of the case, a spiritual and moral influence could take effect.

¹ Mark i. 34.

CHAPTER VI.

EXTENDED ACTIVITY.

1. THE first labours of Jesus were confined to Capernaum and its immediate neighbourhood, to the announcing of the kingdom of God as a free, religious, and moral fellowship, resting on a change of heart and on faith, and to the healing of some persons afflicted with mental diseases. The first results appear to have left a deep impression upon his mind; they were not such as he desired or aimed to produce. This tumultuous flocking together of the people, this crowd of the diseased and suffering, this stormy demand for instant healing, at once startled and saddened him. His aim was to establish an *inner* kingdom of change of heart and of faith. How could it escape his searching sight that it was chiefly *external*, and in many cases selfish motives, that drove most of his admirers to him? True, it was the miserable, oppressed, tormented among the people who sought help from him, but generally they had only a very superficial idea of their misery. Its hidden source, their own sin and guilt, they did not see; they cared only to be relieved from their physical sufferings, to be freed only from their outward cares.

Jesus did not withhold his help; he had a right to hope that deliverance from outward disorders would awaken in them a longing for inward deliverance. But this hope did not wholly allay his disquietude. The night which followed that eventful sabbath-day, brought rest neither to his body nor his mind. The day had not dawned, as the second Evangelist, with the unfadingly fresh colouring of originality relates,¹ when Jesus left his couch, in order to quit, not merely the city of Capernaum, but also the scene of the events of the day before. He breaks away from men and their pursuits, and seeks the quiet of solitude, there to col-

¹ Comp. Mark i. 35 with the less fresh statement of Luke iv. 42.

lect himself in prayer. That he was followed to the place of retreat, as Luke relates,¹ by the multitude is not probable; they had dispersed the evening before.

For what purpose did Jesus withdraw in so surprising a manner? First of all, to escape the painful pressure of the people seeking help, but principally for the purpose of withdrawing himself from an activity which he could not consider in accordance with his calling. His disciples thought otherwise. All four (the number was not yet larger) set out, and did not rest till they had found their master.² To them his flight was inexplicable. For why should he withdraw from the admiration, applause, and gratitude of so many needy ones who had received his help? Moreover, in the early morning after Jesus had quitted Capernaum, new applicants for his help had appeared, and this, above everything, the disciples felt bound to tell their master.

Jesus doubtless left Capernaum thus suddenly before dawn, that he might not—contrary to his true mission—be forced upon a false path of activity. This temptation beset him *at the very outset* of his career; he was exposed to the danger of using his gifts in a way inconsistent with the work to which God had called him, and consequently injurious to it. But against this temptation the essential soundness of his character had protected him: *his pure humility before God and before man*. Without such simplicity of heart he would hardly have been able to resist it. How many sophisms has the mind ready on similar occasions when blinded by vanity! With how much plausibility might he have persuaded himself that his power of healing was an inexhaustible source of good for mankind, and therefore had to be the centre-point of his activity! Such was without doubt the opinion of his disciples. They would fain have brought him back to Capernaum, that he might perform still more wonderful cures. The sick who were waiting for him would have received him with acclamations, but all the more resolutely did he refuse to yield to the pressure. He held it his duty for the present to avoid Capernaum, and devote himself again to his true and proper work. Not to heal bodily diseases, but to announce and extend the kingdom of God, was the task for which he had been endowed with the

¹ Luke iv. 42.

² Mark i. 36.

highest gifts. 'Let us go into the neighbouring towns,' said he, 'that I may preach there likewise, for therefore am I come forth.' Thus he explained himself to his disciples. The establishing of God's kingdom through a *living, free, public* announcement of salvation, he thenceforth looked upon as his highest and in a certain sense his sole aim.

2. In consequence of the painful experience he had had, Jesus withdrew entirely from the solicitations of those who sought his help, and for some time used his healing power only for the restoration of those that were mentally diseased.¹ This explains why the healing of a leper appeared to the Evangelists as a remarkable act.² Remarkable, too, in so far as Jesus proceeded to a new manner of cure, which in the method employed by him presents greater difficulties than in the previous cases. The exact circumstances of this healing it is no longer possible to ascertain. There could hardly have been an eye-witness present on the occasion, as lepers, before they were legally certified to be cured, were not allowed to be seen in the neighbourhood of human dwellings. A healing influence purely spiritual, upon a person suffering from leprosy, is certainly not so easy to apprehend as upon one mentally diseased. The leper, when he came to Jesus, was probably already substantially cured; the fact that he went into the house where Jesus was, implies that he was not in a worse state.³ How else would he have ventured to enter a human dwelling without expecting a severe repulse? ⁴ It is evident from what follows that Jesus very reluctantly proceeded to heal. In this case also the cure was effected by moral means. It was the confidence of the sufferer that first awoke in Jesus the pitying love powerful to heal;⁵ but at the same time he determined to avoid all further requests of the kind. Hence the earnest injunction to the healed man to tell no one how he had been cured. When this person nevertheless spread it abroad, and the first scenes in Capernaum became repeated, Jesus instantly resolves once more to resist with all his power what was so repugnant to him, this flocking of the people to him seeking to be cured. The wish to be no more beset with such requests grew into dismay when he saw how his gift might be misused.

¹ Mark i. 39; Luke iv. 43, says nothing of cures.

² Mark i. 40; Matt. viii. 1; Luke v. 12.

⁴ See Appendix, Ill. 9.

³ Mark i, 43.

⁵ Mark i. 41.

According to the earlier tradition (the later, for obvious reasons, is silent upon this circumstance), he not only addressed the leper after his cure in severe terms, but forthwith sent him away.¹ A truly human trait most certainly, but not in harmony with the ideas of a later period. It shows that Jesus did not look upon such cures as appropriate proofs of his true mission, even though they proceeded from a heart beating in sympathy with suffering men. He regarded them rather as a temptation besetting his path, which he often felt it his duty to avoid. In rare instances only do the persons healed appear to have been led through the healing to spiritual enlightenment and true conversion.

One thing in particular in the account of the cure of the leper deserves to be noticed. Jesus directed him to show himself, according to the usual custom,² to the priest, and make the purification offering, 'for a testimony unto them,'³ i.e. unto the people, to whom the mode of his cure should remain unknown. In all probability, the words 'for a testimony unto them' were not uttered by Jesus, but were added by the narrator, in order to explain the remarkable direction given by Jesus to the leper in the interest of a strict observance of the Old Testament statute. But what could have induced Jesus to give such a direction? As it seems to us, considerable light is here thrown upon the gradual development of his ideas. He had at that time unquestionably become clearly conscious of his mission to form a free community, sanctified in God, of true, believing men; but as to his position in regard to the theocratic legislation, he had not yet arrived at any decided conviction. It still lay in his design to avoid a hostile encounter with the ecclesiastical authorities, the priesthood, and high council at Jerusalem; he had no desire to expose himself even to the appearance of transgressing the existing statutes. For his own part, he, from whom the 'new teaching' of the kingdom of God proceeded, had then indeed no doubt that communion of the spirit and heart with God was not dependent upon ceremonial observances; but the law, the religious institution handed down from the fathers, was still regarded by him as the outward inviolable order. He was as yet by no means certain that he had externally to break with it.

¹ Mark i. 43.² Lev. xiv. 1.³ Mark i. 44.

3. An incident that occurred in Capernaum soon after the cure of the leper, appears to have become the first occasion for changing his position towards the theocracy. From his circuit through the Galilean towns and villages he had come back to Capernaum. He might reasonably have had some hope that the excitement caused by his teaching and healing there had been allayed. This does not, however, appear to have been the case. Of his work abroad such reports had reached Capernaum, that his return was looked for with the most excited expectation. Scarcely had the news spread of his arrival, when a crowd gathered round the door of the house where he was. He did not intend to satisfy their expectations; he healed none, but only preached 'the word' of the kingdom of God.¹ When, notwithstanding his unwillingness to gratify the desire for external cures, he afterwards wrought a cure, he was moved to this by peculiar circumstances. A paralytic was brought to him, and the eagerness shown and pains taken by the four men who brought him are truly touching. The earlier tradition, in aiming to render the scene vivid, has portrayed it to its minutest particulars. An entrance by the door was impossible, on account of the dense crowd; in order to convey the sufferer into the room where Jesus was, the roof of the house was uncovered by them.

In this instance, Jésus adopted a *new* method with the sufferer. Hitherto he had cured the sick who came to him without any special regard to their previous moral condition. It had sufficed him if they had a general susceptibility and confidence in his power. But he had had many melancholy experiences in such cases; the persons who had been cured, generally speaking, had evinced little or no sense of his higher mission, or of the kingdom of God which he announced. He had freed himself from the clamorous crowd. The applause, the admiration, the thronging of the people around him, had only filled him with sadness. In the stillness of solitude he had fortified himself with prayer against the temptation that would allure him away from an unostentatious labour for the founding of the Divine kingdom to deeds of healing, which by their outward splendour shine before the world. The insincerity, selfishness, dread of suf-

¹ Mark ii. 2.

fering, and ingratitude of men, were seen by him in solitude in all their nakedness as never before. The individuals cured had mostly disappeared again; his words of consolation and admonition had made no impression. The leper had at least promised silence, and, hardly out of sight of Jesus, had broken his promise. Jesus had at the Jordan seen Heaven open; he had announced peace, reconciliation of sinful men with God, and the consolation of life eternal. But every day it became more and more apparent what it was that really prevented men from believing in his work of peace, and from entering into the covenant of the new fellowship with God. Like a wall between them and the pitying God, stood sin; the selfish, low, earthly mind bent upon acquiring, possessing, enjoying, which, in its dread of suffering, only cared to get rid of the consequences of sin, but not of sin itself, the source of all evils.

In consequence of such bitter experience, Jesus had grown cautious as to whom he would heal; and now, of those gathered around him seeking help, he resolved to heal only this man, who, by the pains which he took to reach him, gave positive evidence of that higher life of faith which had been awakened in him. He perceived that the moral condition of the paralytic was such as to qualify him for entrance into the Divine kingdom. In that Jesus said, 'thy sins are forgiven thee,' he reminded him, not only that sin is the worst disease of man, but also that it was his own highest mission to free men from sin. Bodily healing from this point of view appeared as only *a symbol* of religious-moral liberation and renovation.¹

4. On this occasion an incident occurred that had weighty consequences. For the first time Jesus came into collision with the Scribes, the representatives of the traditional Jewish theology, to whom his new teaching had rendered him an object of suspicion, and who hated him for the influence he had with the people. Partly from curiosity and partly from a desire to find a ground of complaint, or cause for judicial prosecution against this 'innovator' from Nazareth and disturber of the peace, certain Scribes had entered the house with the crowd, and got into the immediate presence of Jesus.² When he told the paralytic that his sins

¹ Mark ii. 17; Matt. ix. 12; Luke v. 31.

² Mark ii. 6.

were forgiven, they imagined that they had found ground of complaint against him. In view of the high favour in which he stood with the people, they did not venture to speak out and express their indignation on the spot, but they showed by their looks and their whole manner what they thought, and Jesus had no difficulty in perceiving what was passing in their minds. It was not altogether from malice that they were excited against him. Starting from the right conviction that God alone can forgive sins, the declaration of Jesus absolving the man from his sins sounded to them as an arrogant self-deification, a blasphemy against the Holy God, deserving of punishment. All the more did Jesus feel bound to vindicate himself against their silent though weighty reproaches; and he did this in a peculiar way. He made no claim to Divine Omnipotence, but so designated himself as to emphasize the purely human character of his personality. He called himself the 'son of man.'¹ For the first time, and unquestionably with reference to the Jewish theologues present, he so designated himself. What significance had this expression in his mouth? He certainly did not intend by it, according to the common supposition, to declare himself the Messiah. Had such been his intention, he surely would have chosen no ambiguous title.² He certainly would not have revealed to his embittered opponents the secret of his mission, which he had not yet communicated to his most intimate friends. The expression 'son of man' was not by any means new; it frequently occurs in the Scriptures of the Old Covenant. It is the title by which the prophet Ezekiel is addressed by God.³ In the Book of Daniel the Messianic people appear, entirely in the spirit of the Maccabean period, to be thus designated.⁴ That Jesus applied this expression to himself in the sense of the Book of Daniel is not probable, because the 'son of man' of that book has little correspondence with the personal qualities of Jesus. The son of man is not there described as a teacher of humble origin, a simple man of the people; he does not show his power by forgiving sin; but invested with heavenly honours, he is the bearer of a higher power and might, to rule over all the nations of the earth. The sense in which Jesus spoke of himself as the son of man forms a *contrast* to this idea of the Messiah. To

¹ Mark ii. 10; Matt. ix. 6; Luke v. 24.

² Ezek ii. 1, and often afterwards.

³ See Appendix, Ill. 10.

⁴ Dan. vii. 13.

those who were charging him in their hearts with a reprehensible presumption, he sought to show plainly—and for this reason must we suppose that he called himself the ‘son of man’—how far he was from any undue self-exaltation. He doubtless meant by this designation to intimate his freedom from pretension, his humility, his good-will to the poor, his thorough renunciation of all that might be deemed desirable—rank, power, honour. And for the use of the name in this sense we have precedents in the Old Testament, as, for example, the expression ‘daughters of men,’ to designate those who were born of earth,¹ in opposition to ‘sons of God,’ and the expression ‘sons of men’ to denote persons of a humble rank.² Jesus had thus far been labouring, not as a king clothed with power and majesty, but as a representative and deliverer of the poor oppressed people; and as such, having a charge from God, who alone can forgive sins, he forgave a suffering penitent the sins that weighed upon his soul.

It is certainly a matter of surprise that to prove his authority to forgive sins Jesus appeals to his power of healing;³ for only by restoring the paralytic did he confute the reproachful thoughts of his opponents. His power of healing was certainly no proof in itself of his authority to forgive sin. Moses and the prophets had wrought much more astonishing miracles, without ascribing to themselves this power. This mode of proving his authority, therefore, might well have seemed defective. The connection between the preliminary, tranquilizing, moral influence upon the mind of the paralytic, and his subsequent bodily cure, can be understood only through a just appreciation of the character of the work of Jesus. As he attached but little importance to his power of healing, as it grieved him to perceive that the people were drawn to him mainly by the physical relief which he brought them, as he had several times fled from the dangerous temptation of applauding crowds, it is impossible that he should deduce from the *bodily* cure of the paralytic his authority to forgive sins. The connection between forgiving sin and healing stands upon a different basis. The opinion of the Jewish theologians was, that he uttered empty words about forgiveness, frivolously assuming to be the vicegerent

¹ Gen. vi. 2.² Ps. xlix. 2.³ Mark ii. 10; Matt. ix. 6; Luke v. 24.

of God. That he was fully justified in remitting the sins of the paralytic was his own conviction, which he had to maintain against his opposers. Let it be borne in mind that the point of the narrative is the forgiveness of sins, and that what happened subsequently was caused by the doubt about his right to forgive. The words 'thy sins are forgiven thee' were no barren words; they had sent a quickening influence into the inmost being of the paralytic. If his long years of suffering, as we may well suppose, were the consequence of some sinful excess, and had laid a heavy burden on his soul, no greater service could be done him than to hear from the lips of one on whom he relied the assurance that his sins were forgiven. It was this assurance that wrought powerfully on the man, penetrating his diseased nervous system as with an electric stream, and restoring to him the use of his limbs. To utter the words 'forgiveness of sins'—thought Jesus, in contrast to the reproachful Scribes—is easy enough; levity may repeat the words at any moment. But to speak them with such effect upon a disordered organism as to stimulate it to new elasticity and fresh strength, is possible only to one full of Divine power. Whoever can thus utter the word *with effect* has proved abundantly his authority to speak it. Tradition, in the interest of glorifying the miracle, has separated here what ought to go together.

5. Hence it is evident how little Jesus, by assuring the sufferer of forgiveness, thought to claim for himself the power that belongs to God alone. Even according to the fourth gospel, which derives from a later tradition an incident somewhat similar,¹ Jesus guards himself against the charge of seeking to make himself equal with God. He considers himself only as one *commissioned and sent by God*, who executes God's will, and who in all that he does takes the Father for his example.² Hence he assured the paralytic that his sins were forgiven, in the firm conviction that the man was worthy of Divine compassion. He simply declared with solemnity what was already fulfilled in the Divine will, but what the sufferer, in his great weakness, moral and physical, was unable to assure himself of. He made that declaration in the consciousness of being empowered and sent by God to minister to the oppressed, suffering, sin-burdened people,

¹ John v. 5.

² John v. 19.

longing for life. With this consciousness a further development in his public activity had begun. He had now proclaimed himself explicitly to be a *direct ambassador of God* to his people, firmly and fearlessly taking up this position before the established teachers. But the more distinctly he knew himself as such, the less could he esteem the cure of bodily diseases his chief work, and the more did it appear to him to be his true mission to awaken the desire for religious and moral renovation among his people, to gather around him, out of their midst, those who were earnestly labouring for their own moral advancement and that of their generation.

CHAPTER VII.

THE OPEN ENCOUNTER.

1. THE more clearly Jesus became conscious of his higher mission for healing the 'hurt' of Israel, and for the establishment of a communion of morally renewed and believing men, the more must he have felt the need of enlarging the sphere of his activity. The small circle of disciples, consisting of four, was soon found insufficient, and it is significant that the fifth whom he chose was not like the others, a fisherman, but belonging to a higher social grade—an officer of the customs, a member of that body upon which the Jews looked with sovereign contempt.¹ When for his purpose Jesus turned from the well-reputed fishermen of the lake of Gennesaret to the ill-reputed 'publicans,' he must have had some reason for so doing. Such a choice must, doubtless, have seemed to many a great mistake. To select his nearest friends, the instruments for his work, from a class held in such bad repute! And to this singular choice he added a still more singular mode of consecration. Having summoned this Levi (elsewhere called Matthew) to join the circle of his immediate disciples, Jesus invites him to eat with him amidst a by no means select company. 'Publicans and sinners,' that is, guests of dubious repute, had assembled in the house of Jesus. No solemn religious rite, but the bond of joyful fellowship, had on this occasion gathered them around his person. Here are no needy sufferers seeking relief, but men from the middle and lower classes, to whom many evil reports attach, are invited by Jesus to a meal. He welcomes them, and is among them a kind and sympathizing host. We cannot wonder that his keeping company with such people gave occasion to remark. Would it not at the present day offend our notions of what is proper and fitting?

¹ Mark ii. 14; Matt. ix. 9; Luke v. 27.

He had already excited the indignation of the school-theologians. Those punctilious men of the letter had been outraged at his daring to take away, without ceremony, a heavy weight of guilt from an oppressed heart. This sinner's feast in his house gave them a much more plausible occasion for their excitement against him. They did not yet dare to wreak their anger directly on the Master himself. They turned to the disciples, venting their malignity in sneers. 'This then is the founder of the new *holy* community of God, eating with publicans and sinners!' How must this remark have cut the embarrassed disciples to the heart, who, themselves surprised at the conduct of Jesus, were at a loss for a reply. They confessed their difficulty to Jesus, who, in ever-growing clearness about his true work, calls himself the 'physician' appointed for the sick.¹

In this expression it was not the physically sick to whom he referred. He thought of those among the people suffering under deep moral diseases. Greed, sensuality, indifference to religion and morality, contempt of the Divine laws, hate and bitter enmity to human laws, the latter often, it is true, arbitrary and unjust,—these were the sins to which many of those gathered round his hospitable table must plead guilty. What a different position Jesus takes towards those sinners from that of the Baptist! The latter had withdrawn from human companionship; the restless din of daily life was offensive to him; even innocent enjoyments he had denied himself. He would fain have reared the kingdom of Heaven in the wilderness of the Jordan, in an uninhabited solitude, and with the hammer of penitence he crushed still more the bruised hearts that sought comfort and peace from him. Jesus too called sinners to a change of heart; not timidly and distrustfully, however, did he lead them away from the world, but rather with courage and confidence he entered their world, carrying into it a heart full of goodwill and pitying gentleness. He treated them as on an equal footing, going as a friend among friends. Certainly he regarded them as 'sick,' he himself having the consciousness of being whole, powerful to heal, the 'physician.' But as an anxious and benevolent physician, he sympathized tenderly with their condition, their temporal circumstances, their wants, cares, and pains; and the greatest wonder-working power of heal-

¹ Mark ii. 17; Matt. ix. 12; Luke v. 31.

ing that went forth from him was his pitying love. How indispensable to the understanding of his character is the fact that he made the future of his kingdom to rest upon 'publicans and sinners,' the very class of the population upon whom the priests and theologians, the higher ranks in general, looked down with scornful contempt and moral indignation. If he had not attributed to this despised portion of the people greater susceptibility for the truth, a more joyous resoluteness for carrying out the ideas of his heart and life, a more earnest desire for peace of conscience and union with God, he certainly would not have addressed himself to them in so inviting a manner. Keeping these considerations in view, we understand why Jesus chose his disciples from among the people. In the poor and lowly of the land a fullness of religious and moral power, as yet unspent, lay slumbering. The higher classes had outlived themselves. The men of the people were the men of the Christian future. The answer that Jesus gave to his astonished disciples is, in its second clause, directed against the Jewish theologians: 'I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners.' No reason appears for taking these words as expressing derision. The Scribes and their associates were comparatively 'more righteous' than those whom Jesus had assembled at his table. They were most zealous adherents to the traditions of the fathers; they obeyed the theocratic requirements with a punctiliousness, from their point of view, worthy of all praise; they loved their fatherland too in their own way; they formed the national party, hating the Romans, heartily abhorring everything foreign and heathen, and hoping in the spirit of the Old Testament promises for a Messiah who was, after the model of David, to establish a national-Jewish world-dominion in power and glory among the Gentiles. The men, on the other hand, with whom Jesus usually associated, cared little for the theocratic statutes; the 'publicans,' as public officials, were not ill-disposed to the Romans, and on this account were more ready to accept a spiritual idea of the Messiah, and to place the kingdom of God in the inner world of conscience and of faith.

It is at this point of time in the career of Jesus, when the people's confidence in him had begun to strike its roots deeply, and when he had opened his heart in friendly intercourse to those especially whom the leaders of the theocratic party

branded as 'unbelieving' and 'immoral,' that the narrative of the fourth gospel, concerning the part taken by Jesus in a marriage feast at Cana, falls. In its essential features it is certainly not an invention. Probably witnessed by John, but distorted by fable, it was received into the Ephesian group of traditions. The wrong time¹ to which it is referred betrays the influence of fable. The invitation given to Jesus and his disciples points to a preceding activity in Galilee of considerable length.² That Jesus did not shun joyous social intercourse had already become known. As in the first three gospels, so here likewise Jesus appears with his disciples in a social assemblage. Not only does he partake of the exhilarating wine with the joyful guests, differing thus from John and his disciples, the Nazarites and ascetics, whose particular aim it was to show their piety by abstinence from spirituous drinks; but when the wine begins to fail, and his mother, with true womanly solicitude for the honour of the host, reminds him of it, he even turns water into wine in order that this precious gift may not be deficient on so joyous an occasion. From the point of view of later times, Jesus here appears as a worker of miracles in a case in which the miracle cannot be explained by a religious and moral aim. Besides, a miracle of this sort lies not within the limits of *human* power. God only in his Omnipotence could work such a wonder. Granting the possibility of such an effect wrought by Almighty power through Jesus, the greatness of the act is out of all proportion to the insignificance of the purpose. According to the fourth gospel, it was through this miracle that the 'glory of Jesus' was first manifested.³ But at the time at which the fourth gospel places the miracle, this glory had not become manifest even to the disciples, to whom it was not revealed until a later period, and then only in a confidential circle,⁴ and hence the improbability of its being recognized by a wedding company. And then, again, did not the glory of Jesus manifest itself, although gradually, more really, in changing sinful human hearts than in transforming inorganic matter? Nevertheless, the genuinely historical features of the story, coloured though it is by fable, throw a significant light upon the character of Jesus: a kindly participation in the joy of the guests, the wish that

¹ John ii. 1.² John ii. 2.³ John ii. 11.⁴ Mark ix. 2; Matt. xvii. 1; Luke ix. 28.

the wine should not fail; the provision made, doubtless through Jesus, to supply the deficiency at the right moment. Further than this, we find nothing in the story that we can regard as historical; least of all can we favour such suppositions as that Jesus magnetized the water, which in consequence of his wonder-working tasted like wine, or that the guests, in their admiration of his spiritual conversation, drank water for wine.¹

2. The fact that Jesus connected himself with the middle and lower classes of the people, and held intercourse, free from all affected asceticism, with those who were looked upon as men of the world, stirred up against him especially the disciples of John, who, to strengthen their position for attacking him, made common cause with the Pharisees, the national and scholastic party, from whom, otherwise, they in many respects differed materially. Was it right that Jesus should make the entrance into the kingdom of God so light and easy? Without fasts, without stated prayers, without self-mortification, without renouncing the world, without misery and trouble purposely and voluntarily chosen? The supper made in honour of Matthew in the dwelling of Jesus, and his participation in the marriage feast at Cana, had extremely irritated John's disciples. They sent a deputation to Jesus, in which the Pharisees eagerly joined, and put to him the marvellously haughty question:² 'Why do we (the disciples of John and the Pharisees) fast, and thy disciples fast not?' The point of the question was no other than this: why are your disciples wanting in all the signs of true religion?

Thus the moment had come when Jesus was bound to define, more publicly and explicitly than he had yet done, his relation to the Baptist and the theocracy, and this he did not defer. As if the glad sounds of the marriage festival were still ringing in his ears, he likens himself to the bridegroom in the midst of his companions the bridal guests, and by this comparison he intimates unmistakably that the character of his teaching and of his fellowship is *elevation and joy*, that the ground tone of his whole being and working is *reconciliation and peace*. We may well imagine how there rose before his mind the future, when the sounds of joy and the voices of peace would die away, and trouble and sorrow

¹ See Appendix, III. 11.

² Mark ii. 18; Matt. ix. 14; Luke v. 33.

gather round his followers. As he remarked the hostile attitude of the disciples of John, already united with his more dangerous and powerful opponents the Pharisees, there awoke in his soul a presentiment of future severe persecutions to befall him and his followers. There would come a time of fasting and mourning for his disciples too, but it would be no compulsory fasting formally observed, but one which would fulfill its work as a purifying fire sent from God, in which he and his must be tried.

3. Up to this hour Jesus had avoided all *open* collision with the theocratic party. Previously, by the injunction laid upon the leper to observe the Levitical law of purification, he had shown the disposition to respect the Mosaic, and even the theocratic legislation. The hostile steps of the disciples of John and the Pharisees showed clearly how little the maintenance of a lasting peace with the theocrats was to be thought of. The rupture was unavoidable, and the first three gospels have preserved for us the words of Jesus by which it was brought about. The saying of Jesus already referred to,¹ concerning the new piece on an old garment, and new wine in old skins, pronounces in the most emphatic manner against every attempt to renew, by mere *external* reforms, the Old Covenant and the theocracy resting thereon. In the eyes of Jesus the time of the Old Covenant has run out; a new era in the Divine order of the world has dawned; a decisive turning-point in the religious and moral life of nations has been reached; a radical renovation of all relations from within has become a necessity. This was the significance of Jesus's answer to the deputation.² One may imagine its effect upon his questioners. But the relation of Jesus to the theocratic statutes had also now to undergo a change.

Henceforth he drops all the consideration which he had previously shown for the Jewish ceremonial law. It may seem remarkable that he never declared himself against circumcision. But at the same time, he said nothing in favour of it, never recommended it to his disciples, never required it of believing Gentiles. He treated it as a ceremony, as a matter of perfect indifference.

Quite otherwise was it with the observance of the Sabbath, from which no Jew could withdraw without giving great offence. Certainly, not without a decided intention did Jesus

¹ Page 41.

² Mark ii. 21; Matt. ix. 16; Luke v. 36.

undertake long journeyings on Sabbath days; upon his authority his disciples made a way for themselves on a Sabbath through a corn-field by plucking the ears of corn. They thus directly transgressed the Mosaic law, which forbade every kind of work on the Sabbath,¹ according to a later interpretation even upon the penalty of death.² The second gospel has here preserved the original report.³ While the first and third Evangelists represent the incident as if it were by eating the ears of corn that the disciples violated the Sabbath,⁴ according to the second gospel they broke the law by making a road through a field; and while it was doubtful whether eating the corn to allay hunger could be regarded by the law as an offence,⁵ the labour required to make a way through a field was unquestionably a serious violation of the Sabbath. The Scribes immediately availed themselves of the offence thus given to create fresh embarrassments for Jesus. Reproach was now heaped upon reproach, accusation pressed upon accusation. First came the unlawful assumption of authority to forgive sins; then the offensive intercourse and eating and drinking with publicans and sinners in his own house; added to this, the want of all legal strictness, all ascetic zeal, all affected sanctity; and now also the open violation of the holy ordinance of the Sabbath. What a crushing chain of grave offences could be made of these numerous links for the man of the 'new teaching!'

And how does Jesus justify himself against these accusations? The last, namely, that he allowed his disciples to break the Sabbath, was the most serious. He could not dispute that they had broken it; but for their justification he refers to the example of David.⁶ Fleeing from Saul, tormented by hunger, David with his attendants ate of the sacred bread that the priests alone were allowed to eat.⁷ The two cases have but slight resemblance to one another; there is, however, a point of resemblance. The idea of Jesus is, that the order of nature is of more worth in the eye of God than the theocratic statute. The necessities of David and his attendants decided against the established statute.

¹ Levit. xxiii. 3.² Numb. xv. 32.³ Mark ii. 23.⁴ Matt. xii. 1; Luke vi. 1.⁵ Exod. xvi. 25.⁶ 1 Samuel xxi. 1.⁷ Lev. xxiv. 9.

The law of nature is from God, the theocratic statute from men.

By this declaration Jesus took up a position towards the Mosaic law irreconcilable with the idea that the law was unconditionally binding upon the conscience. Its authority therefore depended upon outward circumstances; a purely Divine authority it could not claim. God had set a higher law in the breast of man, and consequently the Mosaic law had no claim to perpetuity and universal recognition. It is even intimated in what Jesus said, that the time had then arrived when Israel was to be delivered from the yoke of traditional statutes, and should be established upon the eternal basis of the Divine legislation. The addition of the first gospel,¹ in which Jesus is reported as referring to the Sabbath-works of the priests, with the remark that in him had appeared something greater than in the priests, can hardly be authentic. Its effect is to blunt the point of what Jesus had said. It was not upon the fact that there was in him personally a higher power than in the priests, that he sought to justify the act of his disciples done by his authority. In the words preserved in the second gospel, 'the Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath,'² the argument of Jesus is presented in its true light. According to the Mosaic law, man was subject to the Sabbath, not the Sabbath to man. According to the Mosaic tradition, a human life had been ruthlessly sacrificed to the Sabbatical law at the command of the lawgiver.³ This severity lay not in God's will and design. The Sabbath was to serve for the rest and refreshment of man. It was to be a day of edification, of peace, of joy,—not a day of pain, sadness, and terror. Jesus therefore declared explicitly that man is greater than the Sabbath, while by the Mosaic law the Sabbath had an infinitely higher worth than man. Man, therefore, and Jesus especially as the *representative of the true dignity of man, and of man's eternal prerogatives*, is set as Lord of the Sabbath. Jesus thus proclaims freedom of worship.⁴

It is an erroneous supposition that Jesus thus and then proclaimed himself the Messiah, originating from the idea that he designated the 'Messiah' as the Lord of the Sabbath. The supposition is wholly irreconcilable with the representa-

¹ Matt. xii. 5.

² Mark ii. 27.

³ Numb. xv. 32.

⁴ Mark ii. 28; Matt. xii. 8; Luke vi. 5.

tion of the second gospel. For how can it be inferred from the fact that the Sabbath is to serve all mankind, that the 'Messiah' is Lord of the Sabbath? On the contrary, the word of Jesus, according to its original sense, shows that in the first period of his career, as yet uninfluenced by Messianic expectations, he designated himself as the 'son of man.' It is to be carefully considered that he never intended to be the Messiah in the Jewish sense, and therefore that he did not allow himself to be called by this title until he had given to the Messianic representations of the Old Testament and of his contemporaries a *new*, thoroughly human significance, quite foreign to those ideas. But he had recognized it with ever-increasing clearness as the aim of his life, to break through the theocratic forms of Judaism, to remove the curse of the dead letter from his burdened people, to set a bound to empty scholasticism and proud priesthood, to raise the forsaken and neglected laity to religious and moral freedom, to give to those who were athirst the water of eternal life from the primal fountain of truth, to render possible to the outcast a life worthy of humanity, and therefore pleasing to God, to bring men into harmony again with the higher world of the Spirit which is of God and is imperishable. As the restorer of the original nobility and ineffaceable dignity of human nature, he called himself the 'son of man;' he was the loftiest bearer and representative of all human goodness, beauty, and holiness that has ever appeared on earth.

The party of the high Jewish Church and of the orthodox school-theology saw themselves, through Jesus, threatened in their dearest inclinations, hopes, and interests. Since he had uttered the word condemnatory of their aims, about the old garment and the old skins, the *inner* rupture with them was complete. Thenceforth he was regarded as the most determined opponent of the statutes handed down from the fathers, as a dangerous religious agitator, an enemy of all time-honoured 'barriers and restrictions.' The hierarchs would gladly have proceeded at once against him by process of law. But his extensive connections with the people, the devotion to his person of all those whom he had helped and comforted, the unimpeachable purity of his motives and efforts, the reverence-inspiring gentleness and greatness of his character, his humble and unassuming

demeanour, rendered it unadvisable to undertake a judicial prosecution against him at once. To detect some exposed point in him was the object to which his opponents directed all that cunning which only the fierce hatred and fanaticism of hierarchical possessors of power can inspire. From this time he finds himself surrounded by spies—every one of his steps watched, every one of his acts, as far as possible, brought under suspicion. It is determined that he must be put to death. His repeated violation of the law of the Sabbath, in healing the sick on the Sabbath, offered the first opportunity to prepare to deal him a heavy blow.¹ The separation had now become a chasm not to be bridged over.

4. It had come to this; it lay in the nature of the case. The pharisaical high Church party looked for the salvation of Israel from the absolute sway of the hierarchy and the strictest observance of the ceremonial law. While they fanned the opposition of Judaism to the Gentile world into fierce enmity, they hoped to conquer the Gentiles or perish in the attempt. And they were ready to hail as the deliverer of the nation, as the true descendant of the heroic line of David, as the Saviour and Messiah, him who should be able to convert the theocratic law into a rod of iron for mankind. But in Jesus appeared that personality whose original moral power and spiritual greatness compelled their admiration indeed, but at the same time forced them to see that he stood in the sharpest contrast to all their hopes and efforts. That upon the Jewish hierarchs and school-theologians Jesus did not make the impression that he was the Messiah, is from the stand-point of their theocratic-national expectations easily understood. Up to this time Jesus had made no claim to the dignity of the Messiah; but to a position much higher than that assigned to the Messiah by the Old Testament prophets he had laid claim. He had become conscious, and he had declared that he was the revealer of a more intimate fellowship with God, and founder of a holier society than that brought about by Moses and the prophets; with his new position and destiny among his contemporaries, he had placed God himself, and the relation of the conscience to God, and especially the holy writings of his people, in a new light. The Jewish school-theology which assumed as its exclusive privilege the interpretation of the Scriptures,

¹ Mark iii. 1; Matt. xii. 9; Luke vi. 6.

lost through Jesus its claim to such special right. This school-theology was standing in the way of all attempts to penetrate into the depths of the Divine nature, to central truth. With its dead traditions it had hidden the eternal contents of Holy Scripture, quenched its spirit, and extinguished its light. The priesthood had come to stand as a wall of partition between God and Israel—it had driven the people away from their God. The sacrifices were mere external performances. The temple, notwithstanding all the pomp with which the love of art and hypocritical piety of Herod the Great had decorated it, was a symbol of exclusiveness, of intolerance, and of hatred of the nations. The highest Church authority was a barrier against every reform, against every breath of fresh religious thought, against every effort to reanimate the decaying condition of things from the original spring of religious and moral life.

Upon Jesus there had dawned the conviction that the eternal truth which is from our Father in Heaven, and which is the central life of things, had embodied itself anew in him directly and originally, whilst all the learning of the schools and all priestly mediation and ceremonial observances were but as a gold-fringed covering, hiding from sight the perception of the eternally Divine and truly human. He had taught and healed, proclaimed the kingdom of the Spirit, had done good, condemned evil, refreshed the poor, raised the lowly from the dust, comforted those who mourned, and gathered the pious together in the power of his Father from above. Dull obedience or willing love in the domain of religion and morality,—this was now the question. Was the pure truth of the Spirit to be diffused abroad, or the error of human tradition to be still more firmly established? Were the souls of men to be rescued or ruined? Not ‘Messiah,’ did he call himself, but emphatically *Deliverer, Saviour, and Benefactor*.¹ ‘Which is lawful on the Sabbath, to do good, or to do evil, to save life or to kill?’ In this mission of Deliverer and Saviour, he felt himself a match for all the cunning and force, which, with ever-growing determination, were taking arms against him. By his question whether it were not permitted to do good on the Sabbath, his accusers were struck dumb. A holy wrath flashes from his eyes, a deep sadness fills his soul. He knows now that nothing can be

¹ Mark iii. 4; Luke vi. 9.

done to help the hierarchical party in Israel—that it is *hopelessly hardened*. And this party shows its obduracy at once in action. The second gospel tells us that the Pharisees now joined the Herodians against Jesus, that is, the national party entered into a league with the foreign (Roman) party of Herod Antipas.¹ This new league was far more dangerous than the merely temporary alliance of the Pharisees and the disciples of John. Religious fanaticism was now joined with the dread of political revolution. The aversion to religious and moral reform was so strong in the leaders of both parties, that their differences, otherwise so significant, disappeared for the time in face of the common danger. The mighty ones in Israel had now only one interest, to render harmless, as soon as possible, this ‘seducer of the people,’ Jesus of Nazareth.

¹ Mark iii. 6 ; Matt. xii. 13 ; Luke vi. 9.

THIRD SECTION.

THE FOUNDING OF THE FIRST COMMUNITY.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE DEDICATORY DISCOURSE.

1. THE fierce life-and-death opposition which the hierarchical party, after the lapse of a few months, made to the teachings and labours of Jesus, had the advantage of speedily and clearly putting things in their true light. In the first period of his public career Jesus had sought to avoid a rupture with the traditionary form of religion, and its representatives. When he cured the leper, he had guarded carefully against giving the priestly party any ground for reproach. But the logic of facts had led further than Jesus himself originally intended. Although he had not called himself the Messiah foretold by the prophets, yet, as a religious and moral renewer of Israel, as one who recognized the dignity of human nature as no one before him had ever done, as the friend of the people, the most self-sacrificing and laborious, and especially as the friend of the suffering, he had come, even in those agitated and ominous times, to be a person so distinguished above all others, that one must either attach oneself to him with the whole soul, or turn away from him with the deepest aversion.

Under these circumstances, the question whether Jesus were not the Messiah promised by the prophets, in a higher sense of the word, might well be agitated. The collision with the hierarchical party had contributed greatly to extend his fame, and enlarge the sphere of his activity. His name was sounded far beyond the borders of Galilee, although he had not as yet visited Jerusalem, the centre of the theocratic power. In his mode of proceeding he used great circum-

his confidence. It was only by degrees that the germ of evil developed itself in the Iscariot, which might as likely have been conquered by the power of truth and love. Of the men who followed Jesus as disciples, each had his own weaknesses and defects. They did not belong to the number of the 'righteous;' they were 'sinners,' coming from the middle or lower orders, where, fortunately, sin was not yet glossed over and polished, but displayed in its natural deformity. When Jesus drew them into his sphere, they were powerfully attracted by the spiritual greatness and moral nobility of his person, but they were not free from selfishness and ambition. They did not at first indeed consider him as the Messiah, but rather as a prophet of wonderful powers and gifts, from whom, for their devotion to his cause and his person, they expected thanks and rewards in due time. And just then, when Jesus undertook to form the circle of the twelve, when he was preparing them to be his messengers to the people of Israel, when, although not declaring himself to be the Messiah, he was adopting measures which pointed to him as the spiritual head of a new Israel,—it might well be that hopes and expectations should begin to stir in those immediately around him which quickened into development the evil germ of selfishness and ambition. How scarcely perceptible, how almost unconscious, is the transition in human hearts from the straight path of truth and goodness into the devious ways of error and sin!

3. When Jesus had gathered the twelve around him he felt bound, in face of the accusations and assaults that had lately been heaped upon him, to *explain openly and solemnly the aim of his calling*. He considered such an explanation to be due to himself, to his adherents and friends, and to his cause. He made this explanation, therefore, not in the form of an *apologetical speech*, only designed to vindicate himself, but delivered it in the form of a discourse *dedicating the new community* to their glorious destiny.¹ This dedicatory discourse was to give a clear and simple explanation of his whole position towards Judaism; it was to enable all to understand what was the real nature of the great and holy conflict against the traditional usages of the hierarchy and theology of his country which he had begun, and which had

¹ See Appendix, Ill. 13.

become more and more unavoidable. This discourse was addressed, not to the people, but to the twelve, who were to publish more extensively the truths and principles set forth in it.

Remarkable is it that the oldest record does not contain this important discourse. It appears to have been lost out of it;¹ for that it should have been intentionally omitted is not probable. The first and third gospels have the same discourse in double form, enlarged and curtailed.² What Jesus originally said, exists most accurately in the shorter narrative, according to which his discourse was divided into four sections: 1. Four benedictions and four pronouncings of woes;³ 2. An admonition to love mankind, including enemies;⁴ 3. An admonition to abstain from passing judgments upon others;⁵ 4. An admonition to serve his cause, not merely in word, but in deed.⁶ Matthew omits in the first section the pronouncings of woes, while the benedictions are amplified. Then follows in the first gospel⁷ a description of the duties of the disciples, and of the relation of the Gospel to the Old Testament law, a description which does not belong to that connection, and is not in conformity with the higher stand-point which Jesus had then reached.⁸ From here the first gospel joins Luke again in his second section, the admonition to love one's enemies. A further addition in the first gospel is formed by the whole sixth chapter, containing the precepts concerning almsgiving, prayer, fasting, worldly goods and cares,—precepts uttered by Jesus in another connection. Only with the seventh chapter does the first gospel connect itself again with the third section as it stands in Luke;⁹ then follow several separate admonitions, after which some part again agrees with Luke,¹⁰ and the conclusion corresponds with the fourth section as Luke has it.¹¹

As shown in this sketch, the ground-work of the discourse of Jesus is complete in Luke, while the first Evangelist connects parts of other addresses with it, forming thereby an artistic discourse of great breadth with variety of topics, such

¹ Mark iii. 19, where the connection appears to be broken.

² Matt. v.—vii; Luke vi. 20, &c.

³ Luke vi. 20–26.

⁴ Luke vi. 27–36.

⁵ Luke vi. 37–42.

⁶ Luke vi. 43–49.

⁷ Matt. v. 13, &c.

⁸ Matt. v. 13–18, and Luke xvi. 17.

⁹ Matt. vii. 1.

¹⁰ Matt. vii. 16.

¹¹ Matt. vii. 24–27.

as we can hardly suppose Jesus to have spoken on one particular occasion and for a special purpose.

4. In this dedicatory discourse Jesus represented the assembled disciples as the *new Israel*, the true community of God in the midst of a misguided and perishing theocratic nation, and himself as the founder, the head, the representative and protector thereof. But even on this occasion he did not yet declare himself the Messiah. Conscious though he was of fulfilling the Old Testament dispensation of salvation, he was equally conscious of the contrast between himself and that Messianic idea; and to the office of the Messiah, in the Old Testament sense of the word, he neither would nor could make any claim. On the contrary, he sought now to portray to his disciples the true Israel, and the fundamental traits of the true Israelite after God's own heart. By four marks was this true Israelite to be known: *poverty, hunger, sorrow, and shameful persecution for the son of man's sake*. These marks are taken in a 'spiritual' sense by Matthew; the original signification of the words of Jesus had ceased to correspond to the idea which tradition at a later period formed of his person. It had appeared to Jesus as his first duty not to conceal from his disciples the life and death conflict in which he had placed himself as the founder of the new community of God, towards the leaders and representatives of the old Israel. But that period which Jesus, in the beatitudes, brings before his disciples, had not yet arrived. They still possess their houses, although they now and then leave them for the gospel's sake. They do not yet suffer hunger; they are not yet bowed down with sorrow, are not yet enduring extreme shame. But the loss of all earthly possessions, and even of the most lawful enjoyments of life, awaits them in consequence of a continued connection with him. Jesus dare not conceal from them their approaching lot. But so great and glorious was to be their reward in the heavenly kingdom for the faithful fulfillment of their missionary calling, that, notwithstanding the sufferings that threatened them, Jesus pronounced them blessed. In so doing he expressed the thought which was the absolute law of his own life. To suffer for God's sake is in and of itself blessedness, the highest happiness. Such suffering becomes, through its consequences and aims, gain and honour, and is worthy to be rejoiced in.

He was quite aware that the declaration in his discourse went decisively and radically against the customary world-view of the hierarchy. A life of undisturbed enjoyment lengthened to the utmost limit, worldly plenty, a prosperous career in all respects, brilliant victories over all enemies; such was the reward which the pious one of the Old Testament expected in return for his righteousness according to the letter, proved by strict obedience to the theocratic precepts. It was precisely the opposite of all this that Jesus commended to his disciples as the happiness to be striven for in his kingdom. Everything was renounced by him which the Jew of tradition held dear; even those Messianic expectations of the Old Testament in which there was set before Israel the prospect of the complete gratification of his thirst for enjoyment, honour, revenge, and dominion. Thus, if Jesus hoped to work as the Messiah, it could only be done by fearlessly and decidedly going against prophecies and against the expectations of his countrymen in regard to the Messianic era.

In order to deepen the impression of this first declaration, and to render still more striking the difference between his view and the theocratic view of life and the world, he further pronounced now a woe upon those whom the Old Testament lawgiver had pronounced blessed: upon the *rich*, who have received their reward in earthly possessions; upon the *full*, who nevertheless suffer hunger; upon the *joyous*, who yet have sorrow; upon those *praised by men*, who yet hear from them falsehood. Especially did he condemn emphatically the *Old Testament doctrine of recompense*, and that external formal piety inseparable from it; and in opposition thereto, he set up as the moral ideal of the Divine kingdom, a new doctrine of recompense, placing the reward in virtue itself and in the consciousness of an inalienable claim upon the possession of eternal life. Whosoever *suffers for righteousness' sake tastes the blessedness of heavenly joy*: this is the *first watchword* of the community of disciples founded by Jesus.

The Old Testament theocracy considered and treated as enemies all that belonged to the Gentile world, in fact all nations outside the Jewish nationality, and the Mosaic law had commanded their extermination.¹ Israel alone was the

¹ Numb. xxxiii. 52.

chosen son of God ;¹ to him, upon his obedience to the law, all the goods and blessings of earth were promised. Theocratic hope, therefore, knew no higher object and no aim more exalted than the dominion of Israel over the Gentile world ; and a deep-rooted hatred of everything foreign was the special characteristic of the pharisaic-hierarchical party. The second section of the dedicatory discourse was directed against the religious exclusiveness and intolerance of the Jews and their hatred of the nations. *Love your enemies, do good to them that hate you* : this is the *second* watchword of the Divine kingdom established by Jesus. Blessing was to be returned for cursing, intercession for imprecation.

The Old Testament law had not only excluded Gentiles from salvation, but had made revenge for injuries received a sacred duty, enjoining retaliation.² 'An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth,' is its precept. Just the reverse is enjoined by Jesus as the Lawgiver of the New Covenant, as the transfigured Moses in the new Israel. His disciples were not only to bear injuries patiently, but under all circumstances to treat others as they wished to be treated themselves. To love those who love us, is still the low stand-point of the natural man. The Old Testament law, according to the conviction of Jesus, rests still upon the ground of this natural selfishness of the human heart, that instinct of self-preservation never free from self-seeking. But in the new Israel egotism was to be overcome by the holy and hallowing power of pitying love. For the measure of this love there is only *one* standard—the pitying, immeasurable love of God himself.

No evil practice was more prevalent among the hierarchical theologians and their followers than that of *judging consciences, and sitting in condemnation upon others*. This practice grew out of the assumption that their mode of religious thought, belief, and life was alone correct. From this belief came the fanaticism which was one of the most offensive features of hierarchical Judaism. 'Judge not, condemn not,' is therefore the command of Jesus to his disciples in the third section of his dedicatory discourse. To judge and condemn the religious views and convictions of others is the more to be avoided as it blinds us to our own religious defects

¹ Exod. iv. 22.

² Levit. xxiv. 17.

and he who accustoms himself to judge others by his religious prejudices, will never lay his own aside. When a fanatic of this description occupies the position of a teacher, his pupils will become proud, arrogant, and intolerant, and thus remain religiously ignorant. Intolerance and the habit of denunciation moreover lead inevitably to hypocrisy; the more the bigot is lacking in humility and self-denial, the more he seeks to hide his sins and defects under the cloak of the righteousness of tradition. *Tenderness of judgment in all matters of conscience, tolerance of the different religious standpoint of others, respect for one's neighbour in his most sacred convictions*: this is the *third* watchword of a disciple of Jesus in the kingdom of God.

The leaders of the hierarohical and clerical party required, as the indispensable conditions of true piety, external obedience to the theocratic precepts, submission to the authority of tradition, and zeal for religious works. Thus piety and virtue were things to be outwardly acquired, not a free and living growth from within, not a moral self-determination of the personal life. 'From within,' says Jesus, therefore, to his disciples in the fourth section of his dedicatory discourse, 'proceed good and evil;' they are emphatically man's own deeds, for which he is responsible. But how pitiable when empty words take the place of deeds, when babbled forms of prayer and long wearisome professions are substituted for a sincere, God-devoted life. Thus it was with the followers of the hierarchical-clerical party. Their expectation of the Messiah, their schemes for the future, were high-flown dreams, issuing in no real result, prompting to no joyful self-sacrifice, and, least of all, to suffering for their cause. There was no love, no self-devotion, no humility. Jesus had begun to perceive traces of this spirit among his followers also. Many attached themselves to his person with apparent devotion, calling him 'Lord' and 'Master,' but they came inwardly to no moral decision, and outwardly to no decided abandonment of their old manner of life. They had taken no firm stand upon the new ground. Jesus strikingly compared those persons to a man building his house upon the unstable quicksand. Words without corresponding intentions, promises without the power of performing, are houses without foundations. *Unconditional, self-sacrificing, earnest devotion to the*

kingdom of God: this is the *fourth* watchword of a disciple of Jesus in this kingdom.

The new Israel, the community of true disciples of God, is thus described in this dedicatory discourse of Jesus, in brief and striking outlines. Its sharp points are at the same time directed against the popular religion of forms and traditions; against the selfish doctrine of recompense, against obdurate hatred and pride, against the fanatical tendency to judge others, and against hypocritical word-piety. True piety has its reward in itself; it embraces all men with the same sincere love; it is tolerant of the religious convictions of others, and proves its worth by moral, self-sacrificing deeds. It is not probable that this dedicatory discourse to the disciples comprehended anything more than what Luke has preserved from the oldest tradition. Jesus could not yet address his disciples as the 'salt of the earth' and the 'light of the world';¹ they had yet to stand the first test. The moment had not yet come when he could summon them to a decisive conflict with the false righteousness of the 'Scribes and Pharisees';² the time for that lay still in the distance. Present circumstances did not demand the delivery of particular instructions concerning almsgiving, prayer, fasting, and anxiety about temporal things.³ These and yet other utterances of less importance, but unquestionably genuine, of which it is difficult to determine in what connection they were originally spoken, have been interwoven, not always with skill, into this great discourse by the author of the first gospel.⁴ With the dedicatory discourse Jesus, however, had taken an important step: *he had now solemnly declared himself withdrawn from all inner connection with the Jewish hierarchy and theology, as well as with the representatives thereof.* He no longer stood within the pale of the old Mosaic Covenant; he had proclaimed himself the author of a New Covenant, the founder of a New Israel.

¹ Matt. v. 13.

² Matt. vi. 2, &c.

³ Matt. v. 20, &c.

⁴ Compare Matt. vii. 6-15.

CHAPTER IX.

THE KINGDOM OF GOD, AND THE KINGDOM OF THE DEVIL.

1. It was probably upon the return of Jesus from the solemn initiation of the disciples into their new mission, their apostolic calling,¹ that certain Jewish elders came to him on behalf of a Roman captain, with the request that he would heal a much-respected slave who lay dangerously ill. The case was urgent, for, upon approaching the dwelling of the Roman, Jesus received a second message² not to trouble himself to come, a word from him would suffice to heal. According to the third Evangelist, who has followed the original document, which in Mark has apparently been lost, Jesus did not enter the centurion's house; he only remarked that he had found no such strong faith in Israel; and the messengers, upon their return to the dwelling, found the servant whole that had been sick. Neither of the nature of the disease (the statement of the first gospel³ that it was palsy appears to belong to the later tradition), nor of the mode of healing, have we any further information. As Jesus seems not to have been present at the time when the restoration of the sufferer took place, it is not improbable that the extraordinary mental excitement of the person, together with his strong faith in the healing power of Jesus, was the chief cause of the recovery. A circumstance of greater importance is, that on this occasion occurred the first meeting of Jesus with a Gentile. How significant is this, in connection with the dedicatory discourse to his disciples! He had just renounced all alliance with theocratic Judaism, and already a pious Gentile stretches out his hand to him for help, which he does not withhold, because the Gentile has 'faith.'⁴ Imperfect as this faith may have been, there lay

¹ Luke vi. 13.

² Matt. viii. 6.

³ Luke vii. 2-10; Matt. viii. 5.

⁴ Luke vii. 9.

in it the germ of moral renovation, and it was the fruit of that humility which opens the heart to the light of truth.

2. Without further delay Jesus betook himself to his dwelling in Capernaum. The report of the consecration and commissioning of the apostles, and of the healing of the Gentile slave, appears to have spread quickly through the town. Again the people flocked to the dwelling of Jesus, and in such numbers that neither he nor his disciples found time, notwithstanding their previous exertion and fatigue, to take food.¹ In the meantime a storm had been gathering against him in his own family. Even his most violent opponents, the Jewish theologians and hierarchs, could not deny that there was an extraordinary power working in him. As they would not bow before this power as Divine, it was in conformity with the spirit of the time that they deduced it from an opposite source. It appears, some Pharisees dwelling in Galilee had really made complaint against Jesus to the spiritual authorities at Jerusalem, and although no legal proceedings had been taken against him, yet the suspicion had gone pretty widely abroad that he was in connection with the demon world, and accomplished extraordinary things by the help of Satan and his ministers. This calumny, the offspring of the grossest blindness, was certainly a confession that he, the founder of a super-earthly kingdom, was a mighty one. But it was said that he had leagued himself with the powers of hell. The public must be led to regard him with horror, as *an ambassador and champion of the kingdom of the Devil*, an adversary of God. A man in league with the Devil, ruling the world of unclean spirits, and thus healing the sick, could not be a benefactor, but only an enemy of Israel and of all mankind.² Although, from fear of the multitude and from lack of proof, no one ventured to urge openly against Jesus the fatal accusation of being a 'sorcerer,' an ally of the Devil, yet they had prevailed to prejudice his kinsfolk against him, and to make them believe the story of his being in league with the Evil One, so that they might become the instruments of his destruction. They were led to believe³ that in consequence of demoniacal possession, he had *become insane*, and therefore himself a demoniac, and they allowed them-

¹ Mark iii. 20.

² Mark iii. 22; Matt. xii. 24; Luke xi. 15.

³ Mark iii. 21.

selves to be persuaded to have him arrested for their own safety and that of others. It is only the earliest tradition that has preserved this remarkable fact ; the later tradition has, for obvious reasons, passed it by ; in the fourth gospel¹ is preserved a trace of the account, with an alteration, however, out of regard for the relatives of Jesus, that the 'Jews' had charged him with being insane.

But before it was possible for *the relatives* of Jesus to 'go from Nazareth to Capernaum and there obtain possession of his person, an affair took place between Jesus and the theologians sent from Jerusalem to Capernaum to prepare the way, we may suppose, for a legal process. These persons pressed with the crowd into his dwelling as spies² upon his proceedings. They had artfully sown the suspicion here and there of his being in league with the Prince of the Demons, and Jesus, aware of their plots, challenged them publicly to answer for the calumny. Above all, he unveiled the deeper inner contradiction involved in their malicious charge. All his doings lay open before the eyes of men, his purpose was plainly to be seen. Was it not his single aim to do battle with the erring and confused spirit of the time, to conquer all sin and evil, and out of the fulness of Divine power to restore a sound spirit and healthy life in the people ? That he willed what was good and laboured for it with all his strength, who dared to deny ? And to secure what was good, was it to be conceived that he had entered into alliance with the Prince of Darkness ? What an absurd, suicidal idea ! to conquer evil with evil, to employ the weapons of darkness for overthrowing the kingdom of darkness !³ No kingdom is at war with itself ; when division exists in it, then the process of dissolution has begun, then it can do no more harm and is tending swiftly to its end. Jesus had carried on a stern and radical conflict with the kingdom of Evil, had vanquished the Prince of Darkness and bound him : how could he himself be bound to him and by him ?

The argument of Jesus was so striking that the school-theologians, caught in their own snares, found themselves put to silence. He was thus in a favourable position to change the defence into an attack. They thought themselves 'the righteous' of the land, while they were deeply

¹ John x. 19.

² Mark iii. 2.

³ Mark iii. 23 ; Matt. xii. 35 ; Luke xi. 17.

entangled in the net of sin. Jesus had come offering forgiveness to sinners, not condemning the guilty, but delivering them. But in the bosom of the opposing party, among the representatives of the privileged classes, the hierarchs and theologians, he had met with a degree of spiritual pride and moral obduracy, at which, according to his perception, all sense of the need of forgiveness was lost, and thus forgiveness itself made impossible. This *sin of theological-hierarchical obduracy*, he designated as the *sin against the Holy Spirit*. The pure and holy spirit of religious and moral renovation, in which Jesus formed his community of disciples, contended with selfishness and ambition, alleviated the miseries of the people, and opened to them a better future; this the hierarchs and theologians pronounced a 'devilish spirit.' In their eyes light was darkness, darkness light, and they had sought to extinguish the source of light by persuading the relatives of Jesus to treat him as one possessed, and to render him harmless by confining him. The greatest sin possible, in the estimation of Jesus, is *the wilful and malignant fanaticism that selfishly and blindly opposes all religious-moral progress, and resists all renovation and development within the Church*. This is resisting the development of the kingdom of God itself. It is, therefore, only in the domain of religion and morality that the greatest sin is possible. It does not consist, as is erroneously supposed, in falling away from a state of conversion to a state of impenitence; it is found, not among so-called infidels and people of the world, but, on the contrary, among the strict, stern champions of narrow creeds, among the supporters and representatives of orthodox faith in tradition.

3. Hardly had Jesus done with the Scribes, after having, doubtless, embittered them still more against him by his striking arguments, when his relatives came from Nazareth to his dwelling to secure, in their blind zeal, his immediate confinement. It is very probable that the Scribes sent from Jerusalem had instigated them to a prompt movement. To avoid observation they caused Jesus to be called from the house. His not answering to the call cannot, according to our representation, be understood as acting rudely towards his kindred. He owed it to himself, to his honour, to his great work, not to comply with their wish. After their evil designs upon him, he had for a time to avoid his relatives.

Having allowed themselves to be used as the willing tools of his cunning opponents in their malignant designs, there was for a time no further bond between him and them. For once, his disciples and his friends among the people who surrounded him like a protecting wall, took the place of his mother and brothers, who, caught in the snare of an evil power, had come to lay hands upon him and put an end to his work. He had formed a new family in which he presided as spiritual head ; his aim was to enlarge it through the power of his word and spirit, that it might become the great household of God within the world.

That from the time he delivered his initiatory discourse to his disciples, he extended his view beyond Israel to the Gentile world, is not to be doubted. What was there to prevent him from taking all men into his regard, Gentiles as well as Jews, and looking upon them all as members of his community, when he had once declared the conditions of participation in the kingdom of God to be founded on inward, moral distinctions ? ‘ Whosoever does the will of God, he is my brother, sister, mother,’¹ said he to those who wondered at his refusal to go with his relatives. ‘ Doing the will of God ;’ a word standing in sharp contrast with doing the will of mere men, of the priests and the mighty. The will of God comprehends and encompasses all that is true, good, holy ; in the theocratic statutes it lay buried in the shroud of theological caprice and priestly prejudice.

4. The kingdom that Jesus had founded in the form of a community of disciples, and had openly announced in his dedicatory discourse, the hierarchs called the kingdom of the Devil. In opposition to this shameful calumny, it was incumbent upon Jesus thoroughly to set forth and make evident the character of his kingdom. And now in the presence of the people, partly excited against him by the malignity of the Jewish school-theologians, he placed in a clear light, in a series of addresses, the nature and essential character of his kingdom. His method of teaching was by speaking in parables. The point of such parables he explained more fully in private to his disciples with distinct reference to their apostolic calling. Three of his parables

¹ Mark iii. 35 ; Matt. xii. 50 ; Luke viii. 21.

the oldest tradition considered specially noteworthy : those of the sower,¹ of the self-growing seed,² and of the mustard seed.³ These form a group through which runs the same thought. They represent the kingdom of God in its origin, its growth, and its consummation.

The origin of the kingdom is from the *word*⁴—the word ‘of God,’ in the third gospel,⁵ is a later addition. The word, as the personally immediate, spiritually and morally living element, stands in contrast to statutes and traditions historically established and officially prescribed. But the word by itself does not suffice ; it requires a good soil : the open, susceptible, believing and loving human heart. The kingdom of God is, therefore, grounded both in the eternal truth of the Divine Spirit, and in the personal capability of the human heart. In the deepest and holiest ground, the Divine ground of all truth, man must first strike his roots ; but neither tradition nor compulsion, but only confidence and love, bring him into living connection with God.

The *growth* of the kingdom is not brought about by external mechanical means. From within does the germinating power work in the community of God, bearing within itself its own destiny, which it reaches if not obstructed in its development by artifice or violence.

A consummation the most comprehensive and exalted is the *goal* of the kingdom of God. No other association is comparable with it in this respect,—so small and unpretending in its beginning, so great and glorious in its final unfolding. It comprehends all mankind.

The three parables of the second gospel grow, in the more extended and later form of the first gospel, to the number of seven. The five additional parables found in this gospel can hardly be supposed to have been delivered by Jesus at the same time with the first three. It is natural to imagine that in answer to the shameless calumny that he was the founder of a kingdom of the Devil, Jesus chiefly intended to portray the kingdom of God established by him in its

¹ Mark iv. 3-20 ; Matt. xiii. 3-23 ; Luke viii. 4-15.

² Mark iv. 26-29. This parable appears only in Mark.

³ Mark iv. 30 ; Matt. xiii. 31 ; Luke xiii. 18.

⁴ Mark iv. 14 ; Matt. xiii. 19.

⁵ Luke viii. 11.

three essential periods : beginning, development and final consummation. The parables of the tares among the wheat,¹ of the leaven,² of the treasure hid in the field,³ of the pearl of great price,⁴ of the net,⁵ point to a period in which the community founded by Jesus was undergoing the process of sifting and separation, and the last decision was approaching.

¹ Matt. xiii. 24-30.

² Matt. xiii. 33.

³ Matt. xiii. 44.

⁴ Matt. xiii. 45.

⁵ Matt. xiii. 47.

CHAPTER X.

THE DISCIPLES TRIED AND SENT FORTH.

1. AFTER the rash assault made upon his honour and personal liberty by his nearest relations, and the slanderous assertions in regard to his character and work spread abroad by the hierarchical party, Jesus again determined to leave Capernaum for a time. He resolved to go this time to the eastern shore of the lake of Gennesaret, desiring especially to withdraw from the increasing excitement caused by the conflicting opinions concerning him, which had probably extended to the abodes of the humblest of the people. He wished also to make his disciples acquainted with a wider sphere of life and action, and gradually prepare them for an independent activity as missionaries of the Divine kingdom. How lacking they were in strength of character, a trial near at hand was to show.

Overcome with the excitement and labours of days and nights previous, Jesus fell asleep in the vessel which was bearing him to the eastern shore of the lake. While he slept, there arose on the usually calm surface of the lake a storm which lashed the waves with such violence that they broke over the vessel, which was not sufficiently protected against so furious a commotion of the waters. The disciples, though experienced sailors, lost their presence of mind. In their fright they roused their master from his sleep, unacquainted though he was with the management of the vessel. They were amazed at his composure. He remained calm, standing among those seafaring men, who in this instance had lost heart, with a presence of mind and self-command that inspired them with awe. What kept *his* mind so composed in such a perilous moment? It was not that iron hardness of temperament which under all circumstances faces death with indifference,—nothing of this sort can be attributed to Jesus,—but it was *his immovable faith in his*

destiny, his unwavering conviction that his hour had not yet come, that he had yet to do the great work of his life, and that the accident of a storm could not disturb the Divine plan for the salvation of mankind. According to the evangelical tradition, Jesus conjured the storm, and at his word the tumultuous waves subsided.¹ But such a sudden and direct interference with natural occurrences, connected as they are with a series of changes in the established order of nature, is possible only to Omnipotence. It is not in the power of the *human* will to command storms and waves; the idea of a moral influence acting upon the storm-tossed lake is not to be entertained. If Jesus ruled nature with Divine Omnipotence, then was this sway without any moral significance, and his person an altogether superhuman appearance, unrepresentative, unapproachable. How much more exalted and exalting is Jesus standing there amidst the increasing danger, surrounded by the trembling, experienced seafarers, in spite of the despair of the steersman,—standing there in holy self-possession, rebuking, tranquillizing, and encouraging them, an image of perfect faith in God and of the clearest insight into his own destiny! He made indeed upon this occasion the sad discovery how little he could depend upon his disciples, upon their presence of mind, and strength of character; for he who as a seafarer cannot command his fears in a storm to which he is used,—how will he bear himself when the storms of persecution arise, and the waves of hostile passions rage around him?

2. A storm of another kind, in a mind diseased, is presented in the case of the man met by Jesus east of the Jordan, whose cure is related by the first three Evangelists.² Scarcely had Jesus safely landed from the storm-threatened vessel, when this man, a maniac of the fiercest kind, flung himself before him.³ He had avoided for a length of time the habitations of men, and taken up his abode among the tombs. When the fit was on him, no chain could hold him, no human strength master him. His cries then were terrible, and he wreaked his frenzy on his own person, cutting himself with stones,—a parallel with the wild storm on the

¹ Mark iv. 39; Matt. viii. 26; Luke viii. 24.

² Mark v. 1; Matt. viii. 28; Luke viii. 26.

³ In the first gospel, chap. viii. 28, two maniacs are mentioned, an exaggeration, probably, of a later tradition, for the purpose of magnifying the miracle.

the child, to the comfort and joy of those who too soon began lamenting her.

In the meantime, as Jesus was on his way to the house of Jairus, an incident occurred which presented a most humbling contrast to the unbelief of the Gadarenes and to the weak faith of the disciples, in the childlike, pious faith of a suffering woman, who, unable in the crowd to obtain an interview with Jesus, in her faith in his healing power touched his garments, and felt herself instantly restored to health. Thus mightily the excitement of religious feeling wrought in her.¹ We can conceive of no other way in which the cure was brought about. The supposition that it was due to virtue contained in the clothes of Jesus not only changes the healing power of Jesus into magic; it contradicts what he said to the woman, and which is certainly not to be disregarded: 'Woman, *thy faith* hath made thee whole.'²

4. In this way there passed before the eyes of the apostles, before they went forth on their missionary travels, a series of instructive instances of unbelief, weak faith, and also of strong faith. But it was unbelief especially, the one great obstacle they were to meet in their future work, which they were yet to behold in a form more hostile and dismaying than they had hitherto seen. Jesus had not, as we know, publicly appeared in his native place, Nazareth, but had, from the beginning of his public labours, taken up his abode in Capernaum. Was he then to make no attempt to gather the friends of the kingdom of God in his native town? The difficulty of promoting his cause there was certainly great. There dwelt his nearest relatives, who had pronounced him insane and would fain have taken possession of his person. When such was the disposition of his kindred towards him, what was to be expected of those who stood personally at a distance from him? In the opinion of all such he was, at least, a dangerous agitator, an enthusiast disturbing the peace of Israel. But it was not for him to spare himself and his disciples any trial, however severe, from fear of threatening obstacles. He came on a certain Sabbath with his disciples to Nazareth, and appeared openly in the midst of the townspeople ill-disposed towards him;

¹ Mark v. 25; Matt. ix. 20; Luke viii. 43.

² Mark v. 34; Matt. ix. 22; Luke viii. 48.

he proceeded directly to the synagogue, but met there with the most determined opposition. Most of his hearers were filled with contempt and scorn.¹ They gave vent to their feelings, though not without hesitation. They did not venture to say openly that they believed him to be in league with the Prince of Darkness, but they intimated as much in the words: 'Whence came such wisdom to such a man? Whence has he obtained such powers?' They called to mind his low origin, the carpenter's trade which he had learned in his youth,² his family, his relatives who were in nowise distinguished, and who themselves had no great idea of him. He could not possibly, in their opinion, have gained his knowledge and art by any lawful means, in any ordinary way. He must be in alliance with mysterious powers by which he had obtained success hitherto—cause enough to take offence at him.³ This hostile attitude of the people of Nazareth towards Jesus left in the apostolic community so deep an impression that even the fourth gospel (although in a different connection) has preserved a report of it.⁴ But what could be true only of Nazareth is there erroneously referred to all Galilee. It was not in a general way merely that Jesus applied to himself the proverb: 'A prophet is least honoured in his own country and among his own kindred and in his own house.'⁵ He spoke of himself from the bitter experience of the moment. At that time he still called himself 'a prophet;' for he had not then arrived at the conviction of being, in a new and higher sense of the word, the fulfiller of the yet incomplete Messianic promise of the Old Testament.

A new and clearer light is now thrown upon the nature of his healing power. When his teaching was met by such unconquerable resistance, as in Nazareth, his healing power could not act, since it was, from the very nature of the case, dependent upon the spiritual and moral susceptibility of the persons to be healed. This is the reason why only a very few sick people received help from him in Nazareth.⁶

The disciples had now passed through a series of manifold trials. They had learned by experience their own moral

¹ Mark vi. 2.

² Mark vi. 3; compare Matt. xiii. 55.

³ Mark vi. 3; Matt. xiii. 57.

⁴ John iv. 43.

⁵ Mark vi. 4; Matt. xiii. 57; John iv. 44.

⁶ It is highly probable that the account given in a wrong connection by Luke (iv. 28) of an attempt upon the life of Jesus belongs to the later tradition. Consult Mark vi. 5; Matt. xiii. 58, the correct account.

defects, their wavering, their want of courage and confidence. They were thus brought to the humble frame of mind which alone qualifies men for the discharge of the more arduous duties of life. These tasks they were now to undertake. Still under the oversight and guidance of Jesus, they were, first in the immediate vicinity, to apply themselves courageously and cheerfully to the work of spreading the kingdom of God. They were to step out from the position of unconditionally dependent pupils, and become fellow-labourers with Jesus, not only upon the good ground where the seed was already sown, but principally upon the hard-beaten highway, upon stony soil, overgrown with thorns. In Gadara and Nazareth they had been made acquainted with the two different manifestations of unbelief: in the former place, with the unbelief of vulgar, natural selfishness; in the latter, with the unbelief of proud, perverse fanaticism. After prolonged wanderings and continued trials, Jesus now considered the twelve sufficiently prepared to labour independently in the cause of his kingdom. They were first sent forth into different parts of Judea; their work did not consist in proclaiming Jesus as the Messiah and establishing Messiah's kingdom; the commission they received was to gather in Israel those that were susceptible into a new community, to lend, after the example of Jesus, a helping hand to the suffering, and to carry on the conflict with the unclean spirits by which the people, and especially their leaders, were blinded and fettered.¹

Jesus showed admirable wisdom in the sending forth of his disciples. First of all, he did not send them out singly, but always two together, for they had to accustom themselves at once to work in brotherly fellowship, and when difficulties arose, one was to have at hand the counsel and aid of the other. Nothing is more hurtful to the purposes of the Divine kingdom than separation, self-will, self-conceit. A peculiar mode of journeying was prescribed by Jesus for the apostles. A staff was allowed them,² but neither provisions nor money, and only one coat. It becomes a labourer for the kingdom of God to go forth with the greatest possible simplicity, renouncing all comforts not absolutely indispensable. By needless burdens the disciples would only have

¹ Mark vi. 7; Matt. x. 1; Luke ix. 1.

² Mark (vi. 8) is to be followed here rather than Matt. x. 10 and Luke ix. 3.

been impeded in their activity, and encumbered in their journeyings. Even for the simple means of sustaining life they were to trust in God and the hospitality of friends and brothers in the faith. Jesus gave them particular instructions to hold direct personal intercourse with men. They should not be indifferent about the reception they met with. Where they were kindly received by a family, there they were to remain till they left the place; where they met with ill-will, they were to shake off the dust from their feet, for a witness that here was no place for the kingdom of God. The stern word, that it would be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for the city that should refuse to receive the apostolic preaching, belongs, in all probability, to the later tradition.¹ It not only does not agree with the consideration shown by Jesus for those who from ignorance resisted the gospel, but it is also irreconcilable with the teaching of Jesus that unbelief carries its judgment in itself. The fourth gospel has preserved from the later tradition the word which is in full unison with the spirit of Jesus: 'Whosoever believes not is judged already,'² for the unbeliever remains in darkness; he who believes, on the other hand, has communion with the light,³ and light is life, peace, blessedness.

5. How long the missionary journeys of the disciples lasted is not to be ascertained with any certainty. That their efforts were attended with various results, that by anointing with oil the sick and healing them they excited attention, and that they awakened an interest in the cause of Jesus, is not to be doubted.⁴

In consequence of their activity, accounts of Jesus for the first time reached the ears of Herod Antipas, awakening in his mind no pleasant remembrances. By putting to death the Baptist, this prince had burdened his conscience with the guilt of blood. Like most unbelievers, he was superstitious, and was now tortured by the fear that Jesus might be John risen from the grave.⁵ Possibly out of hatred to Jesus, the 'Herodians' encouraged these dark surmises in the soul of the suspicious prince. The time had come when, in the various interested quarters, a definite opinion must form itself concerning Jesus and his undertaking. Up to this

¹ Matt. x. 15.² John iii. 18.³ John iii. 21.⁴ Mark vi. 13; Luke ix. 6.⁵ Mark vi. 14; Matt. xiv. 2; Luke ix. 7.

time the idea entertained of his person and purposes had been very confused. The supposition that he was the Baptist risen from the dead, could occur only to a man of frivolous life and superficial judgment like Herod Antipas. Not much more acutely and intelligently did they judge who held Jesus for a second Elias. John and Elias were, in their whole bearing and activity, men of tradition, men of the past; while Jesus, though not at first, yet in his dedicatory discourse, had announced the founding of a *new* Covenant as his life-work. Those were of clearer vision who welcomed in Jesus a seer, or 'prophet,' although probably they did not think him equal, in every respect, to the greatest prophets of the olden time. Up to this hour Jesus himself had held back from giving a definite explanation of the significance of his person and his work. While his disciples were on their missionary tour, he withdrew, it may be supposed, into solitude. New inner conflicts, new temptations and struggles, were to be met; he needed therefore to collect and strengthen himself anew. Upon hearing of the return of the apostles, he went to meet them on the shore of the lake, and again withdrew, departing with them into a desert place. Far from witnesses, he wished to hear from their own lips what they had taught, what done, how they had fared, what they had experienced.¹ He had for a long time been secluded from the people, who had missed him painfully. A joyous sensation spread through the neighbouring cities of Galilee at the report of his reappearance; numbers hastened at once to the point where he was expected. Although this thronging of the crowd was as repugnant to him as ever, and although he had purposely sought retirement with his disciples, who had not yet recovered from the fatigue of their journeyings, still, at the sight of the assembled multitude, his compassionate love would not suffer them to depart un comforted. He offered them what he saw they specially needed—the bread of truth, the news of the kingdom of God and life eternal.² But here, while the Evangelists tell us nothing further of the subjects of his teaching, they lay special stress upon it that Jesus fed the hungry, weary multitude, destitute of food, with only five loaves and two fishes. Two of the Evangelists are so impressed with this tradition that they twice relate, in a

¹ Mark vi. 30; Luke ix. 10.

² Mark vi. 34; Luke ix. 11.

somewhat different form, what was probably one and the same incident.¹

It would be a very strange circumstance indeed if so large a multitude, coming together from different quarters to one spot, should have brought with them no food.² It is, moreover, altogether improbable, according to the idea which we have thus far obtained of Jesus, that he should, by an act of Divine creative power, increase a quantity of food only sufficient for a few to an amount that served to satisfy several thousands. Almighty God himself does not create after this fashion. But, putting out of view the Divine method of working in nature, the artificial process of human preparation is indispensable in order to make bread and prepare fish for food. Besides, it does not appear on what account on this occasion such an extraordinary miracle was necessary, there being money enough in the travelling-bag of Jesus to procure quickly the necessary provisions.³ It is surprising also that the miracle does not seem to have left any extraordinary impression upon the minds of the people who were fed, as there was no remembrance of it afterwards.

No doubt, however, this incident has an historical foundation. That it is twice related by two of the Evangelists, and that even the fourth gospel has it, is proof that it passed in various forms from mouth to mouth in the apostolic communities. How interesting and impressive is that which forms the historical basis of the story! Jesus, after having been for some time in still seclusion, anxiously awaiting the issues of the first labours of his apostles, had just come to greet them on their return. How much had they to tell him of the remarkable effects of their word and acts! The people at large who had interest in Jesus had heard of this significant meeting of the Master with the apostles. For a considerable time they had received from his lips no word of encouragement or consolation. They came flocking from all quarters to one point, eager for the living bread of higher truth. They would fain know something also of the result of the first sending forth of his disciples. Such oral information was doubly valued at a time when the press and other modes of quickly spreading intelligence did not exist.

¹ Mark viii. 1; Matt. xv. 32.

² Compare Mark vi. 33.

³ Mark vi. 37; Matt. xiv. 15.

The multitude seemed to the Master 'like sheep without a shepherd;'¹ and thus, he was the more conscious of his calling to be their shepherd, to lead them to healthy and nourishing pastures. Out of the fulness of his spirit and heart he spoke to them, and they stood and sat around him, and, in the grace and power of his words, eating and drinking were forgotten. *He had fed them bountifully with the heavenly bread of life.* Entering among them like a patriarch with his blessing, as he devoutly offered thanks for the earthly food, produced partly from what they had brought with them, and partly hastily procured at the time, and when finally he bade his disciples distribute the food, how easy was it for a later tradition to understand and represent the spiritual refreshment which the people received on this occasion as material food satisfying their physical wants! In the account given in the fourth gospel there are intimations that the food was not actually multiplied in the way stated by tradition. It is true in this representation also, the greatest importance is attached to the outward miracle, and it is on account of the miracle that the multitude declared Jesus to be a 'prophet.'² But in a discourse of Jesus in which he refers to feeding the multitude, he speaks to those who participated in it as if there had been nothing miraculous, nothing more than ordinary natural refreshment.³ That Jesus had wrought no miracle is the more probable, as those who must in that case have witnessed it declare that they had not yet seen any miracle wrought by Jesus.⁴ And therefore it was that they required him to manifest himself by a 'sign,' such as was given to the Israelites in the wilderness by the gift of the manna.⁵ Jesus upbraids them for their craving for miracles, and refers them from the miraculous manna which they asked for to the spiritual bread of Heaven, sent from God in his person. Whoever comes to him will never hunger, and whoever believes in him will never thirst.⁶ This profound discourse concerning *the true bread of Heaven* was doubtless, in substance, uttered by Jesus. Thus he spoke to the multitude, who, in their moral destitution and lack of religious guidance, appeared to him like a flock

¹ Mark vi. 34.² John vi. 14.³ John vi. 26, &c.⁴ John vi. 30.⁵ Exod. xvi. 4.⁶ John vi. 35.

in the desert without a shepherd, with no strengthening nourishment, no refreshing waters.

This discourse of Jesus to the unbelieving who required a 'sign,' asking for bread, for manna, shows strikingly that he was neither able nor willing to repeat the miracle of the desert, the creating of the Old Testament manna. He had come for higher purposes: more glorious wonders were to proceed from *him*. He was not dispensing *perishable* bread from the sky: ¹ from the Heaven of his spirit he was giving forth *imperishable* food. He was giving his person, his flesh and blood to the world, as meat enduring unto everlasting life.² This enigmatical utterance he himself explains, that it was not a physical, but a spiritual, partaking of his personal life, powerful to redeem, which life, in loving self-sacrifice, he was ready to give up for the world.³ While, in the dedicatory discourse to his disciples, Jesus, by a few striking fundamental traits, contrasted with the theocratic law of tutelage and of the letter the new law of God's kingdom as *a law* of liberty and of the spirit,—here, in the dedicatory discourse to the people,⁴ he sets in contrast to the theocratic life, with its externalities and compulsory forms, the new life from God, communicated by him, as a life emanating from the spirit, the gracious gift of the heavenly Father, in which all true national life must be rooted and grounded. The spirit alone makes the nation and mankind truly alive; only through the life of the spirit, and through every one who has this within, and reveals it, is access opened to the Father. This doctrine of the spirit and the life emanating from it, or the doctrine of the spirit as that alone which makes alive, gushing and flowing from the immediate fulness and depth of God—*this was the food* that refreshed the thousands in the desert.⁵

¹ John vi. 27.

² John vi. 51.

³ John vi. 52.

⁴ John vi. 63.

⁵ The statement of the Evangelist (John vi. 59) that this discourse was uttered in the synagogue at Capernaum, rests on a mistake. See Appendix, Ill. 14.

FOURTH SECTION.

THE MESSIAH.



CHAPTER XI.

THE GROWING OPPOSITION.

1. THE declaration of Jesus that his person was the true bread of heaven, his body and blood partaken of, the imperishable food, had produced an unfavourable impression upon many who had already become attached to his cause. As the fourth gospel states, a number of disciples, but none of the inner circle of the twelve, upon hearing this declaration, withdrew from him. He had never before said so plainly that those who attached themselves to his cause must, like him, look away from all earthly good, and give *themselves* a sacrifice for their country and mankind.

He himself, after the efforts and fatigue of the last few days, felt the urgent need of retiring once more into solitude,¹ in order, in still prayer and close communion with God, to repair his strength for new labours. He took none of his disciples with him this time, but sent them by the lake to Bethsaida, not following them himself until towards night-fall.² And here, according to the legend, a new and, if possible, as great a miracle as the multiplication of the loaves follows. Jesus is said to have walked upon the lake. Even in the obscurity of the story one feature genuinely historical is preserved. In the vessel sailing for Bethsaida were also those disciples who by the last declaration of Jesus had been deterred from following him further. Is it wonderful that in the dim night their Master pacing the shore seemed to

¹ Mark vi. 45; Matt. xiv. 22.

² Mark vi. 48; Matt. xiv. 25; John vi. 17.

them like a threatening apparition troubling their consciences?¹ Before these men, who from selfish motives had just broken the sacred ties that bound them to him, the form of Jesus loomed like an avenging spirit from a higher world. In fact, there was a separating influence at work among those who had gathered around Jesus. Even among the twelve there was one whose hopes and expectations Jesus was becoming every moment less able to satisfy, and who could hardly conceal his bitter disappointment. That gloomy thoughts began to awaken now and then within the inner circle of disciples, is stated not only in the fourth gospel, but also in the second.² Had the miraculous multiplication of the bread actually taken place, this state of things would be inexplicable. Jesus is said, in the exercise of Divine Omnipotence, to have wrought that miracle before the eyes of all, and the disciples who witnessed the incredible event 'had not understood anything of it—their hearts were hardened.' They had just returned from their missionary journey, strengthened by the signs and results that accompanied it, and could the 'crowning miracle' of all the miracles yet wrought by Jesus have made not the least impression upon them? Tradition has here evidently misplaced the essential fact. Had the multiplication of the loaves really taken place before all eyes in the manner related, it must have made an ineffaceable impression upon all; Jesus must then have appeared to all present as a Divine being, and they could not have required higher credentials. There would have been nothing hard to understand in such a miracle, for every child could have grasped it. But what was not apprehended by many, that to which their hearts remained shut, was the teaching about the '*heavenly bread of life*.' At this point it became plain for the first time to not a few that from connection with Jesus no earthly rewards and honours could be hoped for—that only spiritual benefits and moral blessings proceeded from him, to which most of them were indifferent. They would see miracles; they would eat bread from heaven; they expected advantages for their devotion; they treated Jesus as a magician; by touching his garments, not by communion with his spirit,

¹ Mark vi. 49; Matt. xiv. 26; John vi. 19.

² Mark vi. 52. See also Mark viii. 17; Matt. xvi. 9.

they wished to be healed.¹ This craving for deliverance from *mere physical evils* convinced Jesus more and more of the superficial and selfish disposition of the people. Certainly many of the sick became well in consequence of mental excitement into which they were thrown by the transient impulse they received. But Jesus had come to free *sinners*, not to render physicians unnecessary; and of an earnest sincere longing for religious and moral renovation there appeared only a trace here and there.

2. So much the more Jesus felt himself bound to lay ever-increasing stress upon the *moral* demands which he made upon those whom he had called. There was a general want of moral earnestness, particularly in respect to the fundamental condition of all moral power in a people—the *education of the people for moral freedom*. The principles of this freedom he had announced in his dedicatory discourse; the disciples in their journeyings had exercised themselves in the use of this liberty. How hard it came to them to free themselves from traditional prejudices and the yoke of Jewish authority was daily shown by new instances of the confusion of their minds, and by their oscillations in will and action.

Since the founding of the community of disciples, Jesus had *fundamentally* broken with the theocracy. It was necessary that the rupture should show itself more and more decisively *in acts*. The Jewish theologians of the Pharisaic party had, with their pedantic passion for a religion of the letter and for controlling consciences, deadened the conscience of those they led, and crippled their sense of freedom, religious, moral, and spiritual. They for the most part ruled the people, by whom they were regarded as the most venerable and zealous champions of the sacred law handed down from the fathers. Soon after Jesus' first appearance in public, these spiritual leaders had recognized in him the representative of a tendency the opposite of theirs in spirit and life. That their influence would be gone if the kingdom of God announced by him should be realized, was a point upon which they could not deceive themselves. They were resolved to anticipate the threatening danger; what measures they took for the purpose we have already shown. Up to this time, however, Jesus had made no direct attack upon them. He whom they

¹ Mark vi. 56; Matt. xiv. 36.

had been lying in wait for, and who was the object of their assaults, had, thus far, kept within the line of defence. Now this state of things had to be changed. By simply answering their slanders and calumnies he could not conquer the hierarchical party. He had to show that these slanderers themselves were in the path of error, that they misled the people, that they were actuated by an ungodly spirit, and that theirs was an ignorant zeal for God.

A renewed attack, the point of time being not ill chosen by the hierarchical party, made it necessary for Jesus to assume the aggressive. There was strife among the immediate adherents of Jesus; the 'party of the heavenly kingdom' seemed to be divided in itself.

Jesus had interdicted among his disciples the exercise of the Pharisaical means of virtue, as external and leading to hypocrisy; he had set aside the Levitical washings and purifications, and thus abolished certain legal enactments of the Old Covenant.¹ The Pharisees, therefore, as the representatives of the traditional faith, could object to Jesus, with a certain appearance of justice, that the religion of the fathers was held by him among his disciples in light esteem. They required him to defend himself against this charge, and his defence became the *open declaration of war* against Pharisaism, and against the hierarchy which was identified therewith. False righteousness and true righteousness, the piety of the law and the piety of faith—these were the great irreconcilable opposites that now sharply confronted each other. For the first time Jesus styled the Pharisees *hypocrites*.² For the first time he laid bare before them the hidden root of the hereditary sin of the hierarchists—the *secret self-deception of spiritual pride*, by which, in deceiving others, one deceives himself. The language of Jesus is aimed, not at the falseness and deceit of individual members of the party, but at the party itself, at its principles, its methods, its ultimate aims. The Pharisees, the hierarchs, are pious, very pious in outward appearance. The prescribed statute is observed in the strictest manner. In their traditional doctrine, in their religious observances, they are sound. But the distinguishing mark of this righteousness is described by Isaiah:³ they draw nigh to God with the *mouth*, they honour him with *lips*, but they are cold, dull, gross, towards him *at heart*.

¹ Levit. xv. 1-15.

² Mark vii. 6; Matt. xv. 7.

³ Isaiah xxix. 13.

'*Human statutes learned by heart*'—that is the seal of their faith and life. How vividly does Jesus, in this attack upon the Pharisees, portray, for all times, the outward, creed-bound, dead, hollow ecclesiasticism! '*Ye lay aside the commandment of God, and hold to traditions of men; ye wash pots and cups, and upon things of this sort lay great stress. This is your piety!*' How keen and cutting this annihilating irony, and what flames of wrath must have kindled in the hearts of those at whom this blow was struck!

After such an utterance there was the most urgent necessity for Jesus to give to his disciples a deeper insight into the Pharisaic theology and its morally ruinous influence. In so doing, his opposition to the Pharisees came out more marked than ever. These disclosures to the disciples the first Evangelist has interwoven into the Sermon on the Mount, and so withdrawn them from their proper connection. The chief point on which Jesus dwelt was a comparison between the law of God and the commandments of men, between that which is in and of itself eternally true, good, and holy, and that which is held to be true, good, and holy upon the arbitrary authority of men. Jesus prefaced his statements, probably, with a general remark concerning his relation to the Old Testament law. Not to the eternal spirit and substance of this law was he opposed; he had departed only from the ceremonial portion, the hierarchical ordinances, and the later theological statutes. For himself he had long before not only ceased to observe the ceremonial law, but had disregarded the sabbatical law enforced in the Decalogue. Nevertheless, in the moral precepts of the Old Testament he recognized an eternally valid expression of the holy will of God—an indestructible bond between the Old Covenant and the New. For he now declared that 'he had not come to destroy the law and the prophets, but to fulfill them.'¹ While he thus distinctly announced his purpose to *fulfill* the Old Testament, he plainly intimated that it had not received its true fulfillment. He could not possibly have said, therefore, that not a jot, not a tittle of the Old Testament should pass away, and that whoso sets aside one of the least commandments of the Old Covenant will be called the least in the kingdom of Heaven.² On the contrary, he pronounced him the least in

¹ Matt. v. 17.

² Matt. v. 18 and 19; Luke xvi. 17. See Appendix, Ill. 15.

the kingdom of Heaven who, like the Baptist, abolishes no jot of the law. Jesus has not destroyed the 'law and the prophets,' i.e. the Old Testament dispensation, but he had to abolish *particular requirements and commandments*, and above all, their *literal* observance, which he had already done, in act, with regard to fastings and purifications, and more especially with regard to the sabbatical law. That passage, therefore, in the first gospel is a later addition of the Palestinian tradition—a mistaken inference of the Jewish-Christian party from those words of Jesus, unquestionably genuine, in which he states that his calling was not to destroy, but to fulfill, including the Old Covenant.

What he meant by fulfilling he explained by a series of examples. His idea is not that in the Old Testament institution is contained all that he unfolded from it, for in that case he could not speak of fulfilling it. On the contrary, his conviction was, that in the light of the New Covenant the Old Testament institution was, in itself, a form no longer of use—that the right import had yet to be given to it. The conception of the kingdom of God, according to the Old Testament, was that of an external kingdom, resting entirely upon statutes and compulsory laws, so that its commands and prohibitions had reference to the *outward* conduct of men, to *legal* obedience. The New Testament kingdom of God is an inner spiritual kingdom, resting upon personal liberty, on which account its precepts have reference to the *inner* conduct of men, to the *moral disposition*. Under the Old Covenant, murder was forbidden; under the New, anger, the inner source from which murder springs. Under the Old Covenant, the offering, made in accordance with the prescribed rules, works expiation; in the New Covenant, the offering has no atoning efficacy unless made with a reconciled and reconciling spirit. The Old Covenant condemns adultery as an accomplished act; in the New, even a look of sensual desire cast upon the wife of another is accounted adultery. Thus the member of the New Testament kingdom of God has, above all things, to war against the root of sin, 'the wrong desire,' and not to wait till the evil act has sprung out of it.¹ In reference to oaths, according to the Old Covenant, false swearing, perjury, is forbidden; to swear truly by God is permitted.² In

¹ Matt. v. 27-30.

² Levit. xix. 12.

the New Covenant, swearing is forbidden altogether, only the simple affirmation of truth is allowed; thus, by it, official oaths are prohibited.¹ The Pharisaical righteousness satisfies itself with the correct observance of the letter of the law, and whosoever fails not in this is a righteous man before God. The inner condition, the purity of the soul in the sight of God, is, to this righteousness, a matter of indifference. For this reason it engenders and nourishes hypocrisy; whosoever maintains the appearance of righteousness before men, and keeps himself from being convicted of a transgression of the law, fulfills, in the estimation of the Pharisee, the law of God. Thus Pharisaism undermines the conscience, kills religion and morality at their root, and with the disappearance of moral earnestness melts away the marrow of the life and strength of the people. It is the religion of appearances; has only an external morality. It is the Jesuitism and the Pietism of the pre-Christian world. Under the pretence of honouring, it undermines the law of God. God's commandment is: 'Honour thy father and thy mother;'² the Pharisaic statute, on the contrary, permitted the child to give to the temple and its uses what he ought to devote to the support of his parents, thus making of none effect the obligation to honour father and mother. Pharisaism neutralizes God's eternal law by vain human tradition, and puts arbitrary human definitions in the place of the infallible heavenly truth.

3. One can imagine the effect which these severe utterances of Jesus would have upon those to whom they referred. They were certainly first delivered only in the presence of his immediate followers; but there were others, it appears, who were reverently standing at a little distance during a considerable part of his discourse. These people Jesus called towards the close to come and hear what he was saying;³ all were to hear and lay to heart what he felt bound to declare concerning the religion and morality of the Pharisees or hierarchs. How was the truth which he announced to find open ears, so long as the sense of truth was perverted by hypocrisy? How were those to arrive at inner renewal and true regeneration who were thinking only of painting the outside, and who dreaded nothing so much as going to the

¹ Matt. v. 33.

² Exod. xx. 12. See Mark vii. 10; Matt. xv. 5.

³ Mark. vii. 14.

root of their own sins? The Pharisaic religion is the religion of moral varnish and religious mask, and the same illusive performance repeats itself in all religions of the letter, in the appearances and forms of hierarchy and orthodoxy. The religion of Jesus is the absolutely moral religion; truth of intention, purity of heart is its seal. Its principle is that all improvement begins in the inmost being of man, in the conscience, and advances from within outward. Hence Jesus attaches no value to regulations purely external, rules for fasting, laws of purification, Sabbath enactments, formal institutions. 'What goes into a man from without cannot make him unclean,'¹ nor, for the same reason, make him pure. 'What comes forth from within—that defiles him.' Jesus here refers to impure thoughts, corrupt inclinations, evil intentions and designs, which originate within, but without being indulged, nourished, and allowed to grow strong, would never have evil deeds for consequences.² The offence which Jesus, by this plain sketch of pharisaical and hierarchical theology, gave to those whom it concerned, was so great that he preferred to quit Galilee for a time. The opposition to him had increased, but he had become in consequence more profoundly conscious of his calling.

¹ Mark vii. 15; Matt. xv. 11.

² Mark vii. 18; Matt. xv. 17.

CHAPTER XII.

THE MESSIANIC DESTINATION.

1. UP to this hour Jesus had confined the sphere of his labours to the Jews, the healing of a Gentile slave in Capernaum being the only exception, and that was made at the intercession of the elders of the Jewish synagogue on account of the services rendered to the Jewish congregation by the master of the slave. *Restoration of the true Israel* had been the first aim of Jesus. But in the idea of the kingdom of God spiritually and morally conceived, lay a germ which must needs cause it to expand beyond the narrow boundaries of the Jewish population. A kingdom of the spirit, of truth, righteousness, and love, having its seat in the inner being of man, is limited by no outward statutes, depends upon no traditions or ceremonies, no forms or formulas, belongs to no one people, but to humanity itself. No doubt the flame of pure and holy love for his country burned in the soul of the Redeemer; no doubt his heart beat warmly, above all, for the people, led astray as they were by blind leaders; no doubt it was his conviction that the nucleus of the New Covenant which he was establishing must be formed from among the Jews. But the deeper he penetrated into the idea of the kingdom of God, and the clearer the consciousness of his calling as a liberator of Israel became, and the stronger his conviction grew, that from the Jewish hierarchy and theology only fierce opposition and deadly hostility to the great work of his life were to be expected,—the more deeply was he impressed with the necessity of extending his view beyond the boundaries of Israel, in order that the conversion of the Gentile world might be brought into nearer prospect. The last conflict with the Pharisees appears to have given special occasion for such a determination.

Jesus first betook himself to that part of Phœnicia bordering upon Palestine, and lying near the sea. He appears,

although only in a passing way, to have visited several cities, Sidon especially.¹ We cannot call this excursion exactly a missionary journey to the Gentiles; the purpose of Jesus was to see for himself the religious condition and susceptibility of the Gentile world. He desired, without himself becoming recognized, to see them in their homes, to make his observations undisturbed, in which, however, he did not always succeed. The report of him had already extended to Phœnicia. Soon a Gentile woman recognized him and implored his help for her daughter, suffering under a mental disease. Is it to be supposed that on this occasion Jesus really said to his disciples what the first Evangelist reports—that he was not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel?²

The very journey into the Gentile regions speaks against it. Had he not undertaken it because his work was beginning to appear to him more and more clearly to embrace all mankind? Hence the older tradition knows nothing of such a declaration in favour of Israel. But Jesus did use, when speaking to the woman, the harsh word that 'the children' (the Jews) must first be fed, and that it was not meet to take the bread from them and give it to 'the dogs.'³ This was not the language of Jesus' spirit, but of proud and exclusive Pharisaism; it was uttered to test the woman, to ascertain whether she had discerned in Jesus one who was opposed to this Pharisaism. Had her answer been haughty and defiant, she would not have been worthy of help, for she would have been deficient in the rudiments of a right recognition of the character of Jesus and his calling. But when with a genuine and instinctive humility she replied that Jesus could not be in earnest in his harsh refusal—that he could not seriously compare human beings to dogs—that his heart was open also to the miseries of the poor suffering heathen world, Jesus then willingly granted her prayer.

2. After satisfying himself in this wise of the fitness of the Gentiles to receive the gospel, Jesus returned by a circuitous route through the region of the ten cities east of the Jordan to the first scene of his labours, to the shores of the lake of Gennesaret, the country around Capernaum. He

¹ Mark vii. 24, 31; Matt. xv. 21.

² Matt. xv. 23.

³ Mark vii. 27; Matt. xv. 26.

found the hostility of the hierarchical party in nowise abated. By fresh healings he had excited anew the jealousy of the Pharisees, and his journey into the neighbouring districts of Phœnicia, his intercourse with Gentiles, furnished new matter for calumny.¹ A second miraculous feeding of the multitude, related by the first two Evangelists in this connection, finds here no fitting place, and betrays itself as a repetition in another form of the same occurrence we have already considered. More naturally does the account of a renewed attack upon Jesus by the Pharisees connect itself with the previous course of events. The hierarchical party were still looking for a sure point of accusation; the attempt to arrest him on the score of insanity had failed; the charge of being in league with the Devil had proved too gross. A substantial ground of complaint was above all things to be discovered. Hence he was now watched on all sides; the spies of the watchmen of Zion were everywhere lurking around him; to lay a trap for him, to entangle him in some snare, was their ceaseless labour. They trusted that they had at last discovered the means which would ensure his fall. His miracles closely examined were after all not so wonderful; they lacked the signature of a higher mission. It was perfectly justifiable to require from him, in order to accredit himself, a greater sign—a truly heavenly sign. A sign from ‘heaven,’ such was their demand; if he could not comply, then he was—unmasked.

This demand is plausible only upon the supposition that the ‘miracles’ of Jesus did not appear to his contemporaries to break through the boundaries of natural laws in the way presupposed by the written traditions thirty or forty years afterwards. It is especially worthy of remark that, in replying to this demand, Jesus makes no reference whatever to his ‘miracles.’ He makes no mention of the evil spirits that he had cast out, or of the blind whom he had restored to sight, or of the lame to whom he had restored the use of their limbs, or of the storms which he had laid, or of the water which he had turned into wine, or of his feeding multitudes with a few loaves and fishes. And yet these things would have been ‘signs’ from heaven. According to the second Evangelist, Jesus only sighed deeply, and declared that ‘to that generation no sign should be given.’² His

¹ Mark vii. 31; Matt. xv. 29.

² Mark viii. 11.

questioners—‘hypocrites,’ as he calls them according to the third gospel,¹ ‘this evil and adulterous generation,’ according to the first²—he refers to the changes in the heavens, to the red of the evening sky by which fair weather is indicated, and to the red of the morning sky which prognosticates storm and rain, and he asks why they could tell the weather from the signs in the heavens so easily, and why they were unable to discern the course of development in the Divine plan of salvation at a time in which all manifestations of the spiritual and moral life pointed so plainly to the formation of a new order of things in the kingdom of God.³ Thus in these words there is nothing intimating that the significance of his person and the nature of his work were to be seen from his miracles; on the contrary, he repeated the request not to make his healings known.⁴

According to the first and third gospels, however, he did refer his cunning questioners to a ‘sign,’ ‘the sign of the prophet Jonah.’⁵ As to what he meant by this ‘sign,’ the Evangelists do not agree. The first⁶ gives an explanation of it entirely at variance with that of the second, stating that the resurrection of Jesus was the ‘sign’ that should yet be given to his unbelieving contemporaries to accredit his Divine mission. Thus Jesus referred his opponents not to a miracle already wrought, but only to a future miracle. But it is evident on the face of it that he could not have made any such appeal to his future resurrection as the true accrediting sign from heaven. Never before and to no man yet had he spoken of the violent death awaiting him; and is it conceivable that now, in order to shame his opposers, he should refer to the resurrection following his death, as a settled matter? Would they not have exulted in such an answer, and taken occasion to rail at him as a boaster and a deceiver? Was the fate of the prophet Jonah a striking prophetic indication to his opponents, that he too after severe sufferings and a shameful death would rise again from the dead? But, looked at more closely, the fate of the prophet is by no means an appropriate symbol of the resurrection of Jesus. Jesus was not three days and three nights in the

¹ Luke xii. 56.

² Matt. xvi. 2; Luke xii. 54.

³ Matt. xvi. 4; compare xii. 39; Luke xi. 29.

⁴ Matt. xvi. 4.

⁵ Mark vii. 36.

⁶ Matt. xii. 40.

grave as Jonah was in the belly of the fish, but only two nights and one day. If, then, he really made this comparison, he appealed to a prototype not at all appropriate. Besides, it is nowhere said in the Book of Jonah that the prophet's abode within the fish was to be a 'sign' for the Ninevites to testify that he was a prophet of God. It was the *preaching of Jonah* that was a 'sign' to them, warning them that after forty days their city would be overthrown if they did not repent.¹ In the rebuke of Jesus, contained in the first and third gospels, the true meaning of the 'sign' of the prophet Jonah is preserved.² Jesus there declares that the Ninevites shall rise up in the day of judgment with this generation and condemn it; for they repented at the *preaching of Jonah*, and behold *greater than Jonah* is here; i.e. in his person. Accordingly there is harmony between the words of Jesus in the second gospel, 'there shall no sign be given unto this generation,' and the words reported in the first and third, 'there shall be given them the sign of the prophet Jonah.' Not upon miracles, manifestations of physical power, would Jesus establish the kingdom of truth, righteousness, and love, but upon the free word, the *evangelical announcement*. The Jews demanded signs and wonders, instead of which he preached to them, but from this they wilfully turned away with enmity in their hearts. According to the Old Testament tradition, Jonah converted the Ninevites by his preaching, which, threatening the overthrow of their city after forty days, became the sign that warned them to turn from their evil ways. But Jesus was greater than Jonah; how much more elevated his personality, how much more powerful his word, how much deeper and richer the fountain of truth from which he drew, how much more intimate his communion with God! And how had the hierarchical party received his preaching? Shameless defamation and malignant opposition—such was the answer to his gracious appeals.³

3. The attempt just made to expose Jesus, and to discover a ground of accusation against him, had been again frustrated. With his wonder-working gift Jesus had made no vain-glorious boasts, as his enemies had hoped. They were now only the more exasperated against him. They had tried, at least, to embarrass him, to expose him to ridicule in the eyes of the

¹ Jonah iii. 4.

² Matt. xii. 41; Luke xi. 32.

³ See Appendix, III. 16.

people, to win a triumph for their pride, over one whom they feared and hated; and Jesus had put them to shame by his answers, at once so modest and so dignified. They were caught in their own snares. Thus baffled, they were goaded on only the more fiercely in further prosecuting their hostile designs. Knowing that they had the external power in their hands, they were only the more bent upon having a swift and bloody revenge. Seeing himself thus menaced, Jesus felt bound to avoid the plots of his enemies by crossing to the eastern shore of the lake. His heart was full and heavily burdened. He was surrounded in the ship by his disciples, the witnesses of his conversation with the Pharisees. They seemed to him not to be in that state of mind which should have been produced by what they had just heard and seen. They evidently were not aware of the magnitude of the danger that threatened him from the hierarchical party, though it was already leagued with the Roman party against him. Jesus could not refrain from expressing his dissatisfaction. In reproaching his disciples for their hardness of heart and lack of insight—eyes that do not see, ears that do not hear, a memory that does not remember¹—he does not refer, as the second gospel assumes, to their insensibility to the miraculous feeding of the multitude, this miracle not having taken place at all in the manner reported. Jesus reproved them for their dullness, mental obtuseness, and especially for their apathy in face of the conspiracy formed against him. They should guard against the ‘leaven of the Pharisees,’² against the dangers of infection which hierarchical fanaticism always carries; we cannot think that it was *only* against the ‘doctrine’ of the Pharisees and Herodians that Jesus desired to warn his disciples, as the first gospel supposes.³ It was the whole tendency of the mind, as well as the principles of the party, that exercised the most ruinous influence.

As Jesus had before made a journey from Galilee westward towards Phœnicia, he now went northward towards Syria, into the neighbourhood of the city of Cæsarea Philippi, at the foot of Mount Hermon. He was impressed with the conviction that the hour for decision was at hand, that the word which would solve the mystery of his life must be

¹ Mark viii. 17.

² Mark viii. 15; Matt. xvi. 6.

³ Matt. xvi. 12. That the Sadducees are mentioned here, instead of the Herodians along with the Pharisees, appears to be a mistake. See Mark viii. 15.

spoken; particularly he felt that his disciples must no longer be left in doubt as to the real aim of his mission.

He had already made himself known to them as the 'son of man,' the renewer of Israel, the founder of a holy community of God, a prophet mighty in word and deed, but not as the Messiah promised in the Old Covenant. This last character he would not and could not assume, as he did not intend to undertake the task assigned to the Messiah by the prophets. The Messiah of the Old Covenant was represented chiefly as the restorer of the *outward* power and *national* greatness of Israel, as the founder of a golden age, as a ruler in the centre of the theocracy, encircled by its glory. Greater and more glorious than David, himself a David, the Messiah was to elevate the priesthood of Israel to a world-wide authority, and make the Old Testament *theocracy the religion of the world*, and the city of Jerusalem the metropolis for all nations. Jesus had not recognized this task as his; and because it was not his, he delayed so long to proclaim himself the Messiah, and had not even given a hint to his most intimate disciples of the Messianic destination which his heavenly Father had appointed for him. He had been called to fulfill purposes the very opposite to those to which the Messianic expectations of Israel pointed. According to these expectations Israel was to reach the loftiest condition of earthly distinction and power, but it was for Jesus to humble this people to the dust. According to these Messianic expectations the Pagan world was to bow to the sceptre of Israel, but he was called to bow Israel down to the level of the Gentiles, and to obtain for Gentiles equal rights and equal rank with Jews. According to Jewish expectations the Messiah was to confirm for all time the authority of the Jewish statutes and traditions, but he was called to make an end of all these, and to establish the covenant of freedom in God in place of the covenant of subjection under God. The Messiah, as the Jews expected, was to effect by signs and wonders a sudden and complete transformation in the natural order of things and in the history of nations; Jesus was called to bring about by the power and might of the word and the spirit, slowly but all the more thoroughly, the renewal of the natural and moral capabilities and responsibilities of mankind. The more plainly he saw, not only that he could not satisfy the Messianic expectations of Israel, but

that to the national-theocratic party he must seem to be the most determined opponent of their Messianic aspirations and strivings, so much the more difficult was it for him to declare himself the Messiah.

4. And yet this *he had to do*. He must cleanse the Messianic idea from the impure elements clinging to it; he must take out of the useless shell the germ of truth which was contained in it; and he must actually and truly *fulfill* this idea in the most exalted sense of the word. This was the only way to penetrate at least a portion of Israel with his thoughts, and to accomplish the purpose of his calling. Thus an entire revolution in the popular and traditional representations of the Messiah became necessary. How he explained the Messianic promises of the Old Covenant we have no means of knowing; the evangelical records have preserved probably only the ideas of the Evangelists. The theocratic ordinances, we may suppose, were in his eyes significant symbols that must come to an end at the time of their fulfillment. In the same way, probably, he regarded the Messianic promises as a series of symbolical representations of the future, needed by a people of little mental culture, and serving as a bridge to a purer and higher understanding of God's revelation of himself to mankind through the One he had anointed and sent. It was only from such a point of view, from which the Old Testament institution with its ordinances and promises was regarded as symbolical and typical of the new order of things introduced by him, that Jesus could *allow* the Messianic representations of the Old Covenant to be applied to himself and his work; and he could not but be aware that every appeal on his part to passages of the Old Testament was exposed to the most serious misunderstandings and misapplications, not only among the hierarchical party, but also among his own disciples.

It was upon his journey through the villages in the neighbourhood of Cæsarea Philippi that Jesus for the first time disclosed to his disciples the fact that he was the Messiah. The reasons for the disclosure just at this time lay most probably in the following circumstances:—As we have already remarked, the hour for decision was approaching; the indignation of the ruling party had increased to madness. Some of his followers had fallen away from him. In Capernaum, the earliest centre of his labours on the shore of the

lake of Gennesaret, his life was threatened. Those of his more immediate circle were disturbed by doubts and questions concerning him. Uncertain, disquieted, they asked among themselves who Jesus was, and what it was that he proposed to do. This question had already been agitated between the disciples and the people. It is noteworthy that a supposition of his being the Messiah had not arisen among the people. He had been compared with John the Baptist, with Elias, with other prophets of the old time; the Messiah no one surmised him to be, for he had done nothing whatever to cause him to appear as the restorer of the political and national greatness of Israel. The disciples themselves pressed for an explanation; their minds needed to be set at rest.

As they were telling him the different opinions current concerning him, he suddenly asked, 'And whom do you believe me to be?' Instantly, and as if inspired at the moment, Simon exclaimed in reply, '*Thou art the Messiah!*'¹ In acknowledging himself, in answer to Simon, as the Messiah, Jesus stepped at once out of that darkness in which the confused state of mind of his disciples and the conflict of opinion around had placed him. A word was now spoken that kept his followers together, a banner was unfurled by which the wavering were rallied, and a plain and defined position was gained with regard to the hierarchy.

Jesus, it appears, had not looked for the decisive word to come from a disciple. An answer to Simon, which has proved an abundant source of misconception, is preserved only by the first Evangelist.² Above all, he gave Simon the assurance that his confession had not been prompted by flesh and blood, meaning by this declaration that Simon had overcome at the moment the false Messianic expectations, in recognizing him as the 'son of the living God,' the spiritual and moral deliverer of Israel. How little Simon was penetrated with the import of his confession the sequel showed. Darker are the added words, in which Simon is honoured with the surname of 'Peter,' and distinguished in a twofold way above the rest of the disciples. Jesus declares that upon

¹ Mark viii. 29, where the original and most simple form of the answer of Simon is found. See Matt. xvi. 16; Luke ix. 20; John vi. 69, which give the later amplifications.

² Matt. xvi. 17-19.

him he will build his Church, and give to him the keys of the kingdom of Heaven, under the condition that whatsoever Peter shall bind on earth, be bound in Heaven, and whatsoever he shall loose on earth, be loosed in Heaven. With what fidelity these words were reported in the 'Collection of Sayings' from which they were taken by the first Evangelist we cannot now determine. In the earlier source of the second gospel they were not found; and the third gospel, from its Gentile-Christian stand-point, found offence in them, and passed them by when using the 'Collection of Sayings.' However, from a subsequent passage¹ in the first gospel it would seem that these words were not addressed to Peter exclusively, but to the disciples collectively, though the confession of Simon was highly esteemed by Jesus. The honourable surname given to Simon, man of 'Rock,' has been much misunderstood. It was neither Simon personally, nor his confession as such, that Jesus would have to be considered as the rock, the foundation of his Church. But *the Peter confessing just in this way*, the confessor of the faith in a Messiah, which was the inspiration of the *Heavenly Father*, and not the offspring of hierarchical fanaticism, — the Simon thus rising to a truly ideal, a spiritually free and morally pure conception of the kingdom of God, is here commended by his Master as a pillar in the future temple of his Church. Jesus could found his community only upon a new, spiritualized, morally elevated faith in a Messiah; and *the Peter*, expressing such a faith, was hailed by Jesus as the man of his confidence and hope; by this confession Peter showed that he would keep himself from the contaminating influence, the leaven of the Pharisees and Herodians, and that he would become an instrument in the cause of evangelical truth and freedom.

Of great significance is the word of Jesus that he would found a *community* upon his disciples. He thus struck at the very root of all hierarchical tendencies. If the kingdom of God rests upon the *community*, and has its highest expression and most effective manifestation in the *life of the community*, it can rest no more upon the rule of priests and obedience to tradition. Jesus certainly did put into the hands of his disciples the keys which open the door to the community. What he meant by these keys, with which the heavenly kingdom is to be opened and shut to men, appears

¹ Matt. xviii. 18.

from his own example. His *word* was the key, and he himself never used another; it is by the word concerning change of heart and faith that the door of the community of Jesus still opens or shuts to men. Hence in that declaration of his, it is not personal power that is given to his disciples, but only official authority to close the entrance into his community to the impenitent and unbelieving, and open it to the penitent and believing. Besides, Jesus gave this authority only provisionally and under conditions: so long as he was at the head of his community he kept it himself; not until after his death, or temporarily in his absence, was this authority to be exercised in his stead by Peter and the apostles as representatives of the community. They were not only to announce the word of the kingdom, they were also to receive into it such as were worthy, and to keep out the unworthy. The real exclusion, however, from this fellowship was left to the whole body of the Church, as a subsequent repetition of this remarkable utterance of Jesus in its right connection tells us.¹ No further authority is contained in these words of his. This authority was indispensable, for it belongs to the nature of every association of men to determine, of itself or through its representatives, whether those who seek admission comply with the requisite conditions, and whether those who are admitted discharge the duties of membership.

5. But Jesus did not consider the larger circle of his disciples yet able to receive and to bear in its true sense the declaration that he was the Messiah. Accordingly, he forbade his immediate disciples to make any communication of the fact to any one.² How appropriate this prohibition was, is evident from the further disclosure which, after Simon had recognized the Messiahship, Jesus proceeded to make. The Messiah of the Old Testament was to *reign*, crowned with honour and renown; he was to ascend and maintain the throne of David re-established in a splendour far surpassing the times of the ancient founder of the power of Israel. On the contrary, the assured conviction of Jesus had now for a long time been that it would be his doom to *suffer* and to *die* for the work of his life. He saw with great satisfaction that Simon seemed no longer to share the Messianic dreams and delusions of the hierarchical party,

¹ Matt. xviii. 17.

² Mark viii. 30; Matt. xvi. 20; Luke ix. 21.

that he recognized in him the Messiah, the founder of the inner, spiritual kingdom of God. But with this, Simon had not yet obtained any insight into the fate awaiting his Master. It came more naturally to him to yield himself to the delusive idea that the hostility of the hierarchy to Jesus would cease with time, that the way would be opened for a peaceful reform of Judaism, and that Jesus would be rewarded at last for all his pains with earthly thanks and human honours. Thus even the more clear-sighted of the disciples were still beguiled by these illusive hopes, and the nearer the decisive hour approached, the more did Jesus hold it to be his duty to do what he could to dispel these visions. What he hitherto had not spoken of, partly because he himself had not attained to full certainty, and partly because his disciples were not yet able to bear it, that he now declared: that he would be condemned by the highest court of the Jewish nation and executed as a criminal.¹ This his fate he referred to in no ambiguous terms, but spoke of it to his disciples as certain, suffering no doubt to linger in their minds as to the truth and strength of his own conviction on this point. That he and his cause would not go down in suffering and death—this likewise he declared beforehand with perfect confidence. With his suffering, he announced at the same time his resurrection; with his apparent destruction, his certain, speedy, and glorious victory.

But what enigmas are wrapped up in a human heart! The same Simon who had been the first to apprehend and declare the Messianic destiny of Jesus in the higher meaning of the word, was now the first to be surprised and shocked at the consequences necessarily involved in this higher conception. Thus man in his conscience and reason often fully acknowledges what in feeling and in secret inclination still meets with resistance. There was awakened in Simon by the disclosures of Jesus an emotion doubly painful: a noble, purely human sorrow for the cruel fate awaiting his beloved Master, and a fear, not free from selfishness, of a probably similar fate befalling him and his fellow-disciples. And it may be that the fear exceeded the sorrow. Jesus stood now with his disciples at a critical point. His declaration of his

¹ Mark viii. 31; Matt. xvi. 21; Luke ix. 22.

Messiahship was inseparable from the disclosure that he was going towards suffering and a violent death. He would be a *suffering* Messiah, a Messiah the very opposite to all the suppositions and expectations of traditional Judaism. Only by suffering and dying could he fulfill the destiny of his life on earth in full harmony with the Divine will. The demand of Simon that he should avoid suffering¹ was the renewal of one of the temptations that assailed him so strongly for the first time after his meeting with the Baptist. He was no morose ascetic, knowing not how to appreciate the enjoyment of true life and its pure pleasures. The vision of a career full of activity, rich in its results, crowned with honours, a career worthy in the sight of God and man, was by no means without attraction and charm for him. It is an essential trait of the character of Jesus, that, in the noblest and fullest sense of the word, he had a profound *joy in life*. The prospect, opening before him with steadily increasing clearness, of a shameful and violent death, could not but weigh heavily upon his mind; and the desire to avoid the suffering was so purely human, it was so instinctive a dictate of a healthy nature, that it could not but be felt by a being truly human. But it certainly was a *temptation* at the same time, and therefore Jesus called Simon a 'Satan,' i.e. a tempter, because he called out and sustained that desire in him, instead of helping him to suppress and overcome it. 'Thou thinkest not of what is divine, but of what is human.'² How appropriate this answer, and what moral elevation it shows! Human was it in this case to avoid suffering, divine was it to bear it for God's sake; and why it was absolutely necessary, the disciples and the community of Jesus had yet to learn.

¹ Mark viii. 32; Matt. xvi. 22.

² Mark viii. 33; Matt. xvi. 23.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE TRANSFIGURATION OF SUFFERING.

1. To the Jews a *suffering* Messiah was a contradiction in terms. The Old Testament knows nothing of such an idea, neither is it found in the later Rabbinical or Talmudical writings. Before Jesus could represent himself to the disciples as the suffering Messiah, the last tie that bound him to the popular traditional mode of thought must have been broken for ever in his mind. There was nothing now in common between the hopes of his contemporaries and his personal conviction. The future lay open before him in an *entirely new light*. The fulfillment of the Old Covenant in his person was the non-fulfillment of all the theocratic expectations. The idea that the Messiah was to ascend to the height of earthly power and honour was to be realized by his descending into the depths of earthly weakness and shame.

The conviction that suffering was the final destiny and true consecration of his calling as Redeemer had gradually grown into full clearness in the inmost being of Jesus; and it was only through this conviction that he rose to the height of his calling and perfected himself. From this time forward he gave utterance to the profoundest ideas, to truths of the grandest import, for all centuries the most momentous, to sentiments the most elevated that ever flowed from human lips. A superhuman splendour now beamed from him; he held himself no longer under constraint; he revealed himself as he was. The light of his inner life, hitherto more or less veiled, shone with unclouded splendour into the darkness of human sin and earthly misery.

Having first announced his suffering destiny to the apostles, having rebuked Simon, having repelled the very first motions of the tempting instinct of self-preservation, it became a necessity for him to dispel in the larger circle of his

adherents every delusion in regard to his purpose in life, especially as he aimed to define with increasing exactness the nature of the community founded by him. He therefore called around him a number of those friendly to him, who until now had kept at a distance, among whom doubtless there were not a few still very much in the dark as to his aim,¹ and to these persons he announced the conditions upon which alone it was thenceforth possible to join his cause, 'to follow him.'

As the first indispensable condition of discipleship he demanded *self-denial, self-sacrifice*. The essential fault of the hierarchy was egotism. Their hearts were set upon acquiring, possessing, long life, worldly enjoyment. For every good deed there must be a reward, and every virtue God was expected to recompense richly. This root of all evil was to be thoroughly extirpated. Good is to be done, not with an eye to a reward, but for its own sake alone; love to God and to our neighbour carries its reward in itself; every sacrifice in the service of truth, righteousness, freedom, peace, is a spring of the purest and most abiding joys. When the supreme good, the *life eternal*, is received by the members of the kingdom of God, other goods lose all worth in comparison. For this reason Jesus required without qualification that his disciples should rise superior to the instinct of self-preservation, give up the mortal life for the immortal, consider the total worth of all earthly treasures as nought compared with the one heavenly; only thus would they be in a condition to meet, with calm courage, the grave events that were approaching. He plainly foresees, however, that not all his disciples will prove equal to the coming dangers and sufferings; that among the well-disposed now gathered around him there will not be wanting instances of falling away and denial. Now already he passes judgment upon such false disciples: whosoever denies him and his cause in the hour of need will be denied by him in the day of his glory.

Thus not alone his future sufferings but his future glory did Jesus foresee and foretell. According to the evangelical tradition he repeatedly announced to his disciples his resurrection and reappearance in victorious splendour.² It is

¹ Mark viii. 34; Matt. xvi. 24; Luke ix. 23.

² Mark viii. 31; Matt. xvi. 21; Luke ix. 22; Mark viii. 38; Matt. xvi. 27; Luke ix. 26.

not, however, probable that he foretold his resurrection then in such explicit terms. According to this same evangelical tradition, the apostles were evidently astonished by his resurrection; the first rumour of it they received with utter incredulity, and they were with difficulty convinced that it had the testimony of the Scripture. That Jesus foretold his glorious reappearance is altogether probable; but the deeper spiritual and moral sense of the prediction must not be confounded with the form in which the prediction was given. It is not proved nor is it possible that he predicted a personal return in the body, in the visible brightness of a heavenly glory and attended by angelic hosts, for the purpose of establishing an earthly kingdom. He who founded a kingdom of truth, of righteousness, of love, a kingdom of the Spirit, could not possibly represent external splendour, earthly power, as its crowning object. He usually put forth his deepest thoughts in those figurative forms that were best fitted to the apprehension of his hearers. Even his disciples, naturally enough, were unable to rise to a purely spiritual conception of the reappearance of their Master; and even had Jesus described his return as wholly spiritual in its nature, his disciples would nevertheless have pictured it to themselves, arrayed in visible pomp, invested with outward signs.

2. So much may be said with confidence: in the same solemn moment in which Jesus for the first time explicitly foretold his approaching ignominious end, he announced also for the first time that a complete success and victory would follow immediately upon the apparent destruction of his life and his cause. It was necessary that his disciples should fully understand the solemnity of the position, and not deceive themselves for an instant in regard to the daily-increasing danger; but they were also to cherish an assured hope of the ultimate victory that would crown the cause to which they had given their strength and their heart, property and life.

Jesus was thoroughly penetrated with the conviction that the generation then living would witness the triumph of his gospel. In the second and third gospels the declaration which he made to this effect is preserved in its original form.¹ He affirmed in the plainest manner that many of those who were standing around him, would during their lives see the

¹ Mark ix. 1; Luke ix. 27.

'kingdom of God' coming with power. The later tradition was not contented with this simple statement. In the first gospel it is so far changed as to represent him as having said that some of those present would not die before they saw the 'son of man' coming into his kingdom.¹ Although Jesus foretold his return in an *impersonal* sense, it corresponded better with later ideas to represent it as a *personal* reappearance. Thus what he meant in a spiritual and moral sense, came to have an outward, even corporeal, significance.

In consequence of these disclosures, Jesus rose to a state of mind unusually elevated. The deepest secret of his life was now declared, the whole sum and substance of his mission revealed, his future unveiled. The apparent destruction and the sure victory of his cause stood before his eyes and those of his disciples as an unalterable fact. For his nation, and indeed for all nations, he had consecrated himself a spotless sacrifice to death. It was on *Gentile* soil that he stood when he foretold suffering and victory. Already, then, in spirit and heart he embraced all mankind. His consecration to death is impressed upon all that he thought, said and did. But in thus opening his inmost soul to his disciples, in thus confiding to them his most secret thoughts, and in making such momentous communications in regard to his future and the development of his kingdom to a still larger circle of his followers, what profound emotions must have been his, possessed as he was of such keen sensibility! He stood in need of undisturbed repose, in order to collect and strengthen himself. With Simon, James and John, the most intimate of his immediate disciples, he withdrew into the stillness of the mountains, to be alone with them there. How long they remained in this retirement we do not know; a remarkable incident that occurred during this time is related in the records. Upon the summit of the mountain which Jesus ascended with his disciples, it is stated that a most wonderful change suddenly came over him before their eyes. His features and even his clothes shone with light, his person seemed like an apparition from a higher world. Wonder followed upon wonder; the gates of the past flew open; the pious heroes of the Old Testament, Moses and Elias, the pillars of the Old Covenant, appeared and conversed with Jesus,

¹ Matt. xvi. 28.

as Luke reports, about the fearful fate awaiting him in Jerusalem. A cloud came down from heaven, and the same Divine voice which at his baptism proclaimed Jesus the beloved son of God was again heard for his attestation.¹

That this incident could not have occurred as thus reported, is intimated by certain particulars of the evangelical narrative itself. According to the third gospel, the three disciples present had fallen asleep,² while the second represents them as so frightened that Simon Peter, for example, knew not what he said.³ The first gospel reports that they were so bereft of all presence of mind that Jesus had to take hold of them to recall them to themselves.⁴ Thus, according to these reports, the immediate witnesses were evidently without any power of calm observation; they could not possibly have formed a correct idea of the occurrence, and accordingly it easily took, in the later tradition, a legendary form. There is nevertheless in this case too an historical fact at the basis of this evangelical narration. After the exciting and exhausting moments of his last declaration, Jesus did really withdraw with the three disciples to the mountain, and was there really in communion with Moses and Elias among them. But we must not content ourselves merely with the husk of the evangelical narrative—we must penetrate to the kernel. How much had he yet to say to those friends of his—what they had hitherto been unable to bear—concerning the true relation in which he stood to the two heroes of the Old Covenant! Moses and Elias they had not yet rightly appreciated, nor understood the position which they occupied in the history of salvation, subordinate as it was. First, upon the height of a purified conception of the Messiah, as one who would save the nation, not with sword and sceptre, but by suffering and dying, Jesus could tell his disciples what was the true relation which he bore to Moses and Elias, and could show them the difference between himself and those pillars of the Old Testament theocracy. He set before his three most intimate friends (the other disciples not being yet able to apprehend it) Moses and Elias as they truly were in the light of his Messianic destiny. Both these prophets, great as they were, mighty

¹ Mark ix. 2; Matt. xvii. 1; Luke ix. 28.

³ Mark ix. 6.

² Luke ix. 32.

⁴ Matt. xvii. 6.

as were their labours,—one as the founder, the other as the guardian of the law,—stood, nevertheless, infinitely below him, were, in fact, to him only signs and preparers of his way. Thenceforth their authority was subordinate to his; in him the completion of their imperfect work was to be looked for. The later tradition has obliterated in this narrative traits full of significance. Luke¹ represents Moses and Elias as sharing in the splendour of the transfiguration, while, according to the two other Evangelists, it was Jesus alone who was transfigured. Thus the traces of a later hand amplifying the account are here visible. Those great ones of the Old Testament were now to disappear in their setting glory before the rising sun of life. They had been men of the law. In them had not throbbed a heart inexhaustible in love, glowing with Divine mercy; they were men of iron will, of stern purpose; their hands had been stained with blood, and it was with force and compulsion, in an unevangelical manner, they had sought to prepare the way for the kingdom of God. But Jesus poured out *his own blood* in the service of his people and mankind; this was the splendour of *his* consecration, the light of *his* transfiguration.

The exhaustion of the three disciples—a condition in which we find them again in one of the saddest hours in the life of Jesus—and their desire to tarry longer with Jesus in conversation so inspiring, and opening to them such new views, are particulars in the story of the transfiguration thoroughly credible. Without doubt, the disciples heard the voice, that Jesus was the beloved son of God, not with the outward ear from the clouds of heaven, but with the inner ear from their conscience. It was the voice of the conviction growing ever stronger, that a new and better revelation was given in Jesus to the people of Israel, that from his countenance beamed the countenance of God himself, that in him the promises of the Old Covenant found their glorious fulfillment, and that Jesus was the first-begotten son of God in a far higher sense than Israel or its prophets, high-priests, and kings.² Surrounded by the light of a new revelation, he appeared to the three in a glorified form—the glory of a higher world was shed over his person; he stood there, spiritualized before their eyes. Never before had they discerned

¹ Luke ix. 31.

² Exod. iv. 22; Deut. xxxii. 6; Ps. lxxxii. 6; Hos. xi. 1.

so plainly his hidden greatness; never before had his serene sublimity, his incomparable superiority, even by the side of the greatest men of the Old Covenant, been made so manifest to their view. The astonishment, the fear, the awe, the prostration of the disciples, as described by the Evangelists, are traits entirely historical. Hitherto they had seen mainly the human, natural side of Jesus; now there was revealed to them his divine, supernatural greatness and dignity. A sacred awe thrilled their souls. Can we wonder that these excitable men, under such circumstances, rose to a state of ecstasy, and imagined that they saw heavenly visions, and heard voices from another world? Is it difficult to understand that the later tradition should exaggerate and ornament incidents in themselves already wonderful?

3. That the occurrence was essentially what we have represented it, is confirmed by the conversation between Jesus and his disciples upon their descent from the mountain. They had come to a right understanding of Moses and his relation to Jesus, but as to the significance of Elias in relation to him, they were yet in doubt. According to the prevalent notion of the time, Elias was to reappear and announce the advent of the Messiah. But Elias had not appeared, and yet Jesus had declared himself to his disciples as the Messiah. Here was a point that still troubled them; here was an enigma that Jesus must solve. There would have been no difficulty had Elias appeared to the disciples on the mount of transfiguration in a bodily form. It was because Elias had not thus appeared to them that doubt and hesitation arose in their minds. The way also that Jesus took to remove the difficulty shows clearly that no appearance of Elias had taken place.¹ He rejects as unfounded the expectations prevalent among the Jewish theologians, of the return of Elias before the Messianic times. According to the prevalent opinion, Elias was to appear before the Messiah, 'to restore all things,' so that in this case the Messiah had but to enter his kingdom after it had been completely established. Such an expectation agreed with the splendid picture of the Messiah cherished by the Pharisees, but not with the idea of a suffering and dying Redeemer. Hence Jesus declared plainly that the prophet Elias would *not* prepare the way for him. The

¹ What Jesus said is preserved in Mark in its original form (Mark ix. 12). Compare Matt. xvii. 11.

promise of the reappearance of Elias¹ had been fulfilled—such was the conviction of Jesus—in the life of the Baptist. The forerunner of the suffering Messiah could not be one who ‘restored all things;’ he must be one whose own fate was a type of the Messiah’s sufferings; one upon whom men wreaked their malice, a man like John the Baptist.² So did Jesus, free and independent of the letter, interpret the Old Testament prophecy, so decisively did he regard suffering as the necessary condition for working in the Divine kingdom.³

¹ Malachi iv. 5.

² Mark ix. 13; Matt. xvii. 12.

³ See Appendix, III. 17.

CHAPTER XIV.

HIGHER TEACHING.

1. THE disciples had passed through their first period of probation. They had been led by their Master to the spiritual height of the Messianic vision, and initiated into the moral depth of the evangelical mystery of the kingdom of God. The work of Jesus in Galilee was nearly finished. He had founded a community which, finding its centre in him, had set itself free from the yoke of the letter and from spiritual subjection to the hierarchy, and had obtained a firm standing-ground upon the foundation of truth, freedom, righteousness, and love to God and man. He had already scattered the seeds of his ideas in the neighbouring regions of heathendom; had boldly confronted the ruling party of the Jewish theologues and hierarchs, and more and more pointedly had the difference come to light between them and himself. The impossibility of joining a new conviction to the traditionary statutes, a spiritual kingdom of faith to the theocratic kingdom of law, had become evident. A great final struggle, a life and death conflict between two tendencies in the history of mankind had become inevitable. But it was not in Galilee that the approaching decision could take place; the central point of the theocracy, the city of Jerusalem, must be its theatre. There, at the seat of Judaism, dead in its traditions, under the eyes of the supreme ecclesiastical authorities, in sight of the temple and its sacrificial ceremonial, before the representatives of the reigning school-theology, Jesus must vindicate his principles, establish his community, contend with his opponents, and seal his life-work with his blood.

After he had publicly declared himself the Messiah, it lay in the nature of the case that the ultimate decision must soon come. The hierarchy must either acknowledge him or persecute and crush him. But it was not for Jesus to precipitate

the hour. It was an urgent necessity that insight and conviction as to his destiny should be clear and strong in the disciples, so that they might not only stand by him faithfully in the last conflict, but when he fell, might defend his cause and extend and advance it under the greatest difficulties and dangers. On this account he had already accustomed them, upon their first missionary journey, to decide and act for themselves; but before transferring his labours to Judea, he deemed a second more extended missionary excursion indispensable for their further education. With the change of his sphere of labour to Judea, a new field of missionary work opened itself. Among the Samaritans, who were much under the influence of heathenism, the gospel had not yet been published, and the journey to Judea led by the nearest way through Samaria. How could the disciples better prepare themselves for the final struggle than by a preliminary enterprise among a population still so far removed from the gospel as the Samaritans were? If it seem strange that Luke alone mentions this second missionary journey,¹ it must not be overlooked that there is an evident omission² at this point in the first two gospels, as the final journey of Jesus from Galilee to Judea is by them only briefly alluded to. Luke fills up, with his journey-report, the gap in the narrative.

Before journeying to Judea, Jesus had considerably increased the number of his disciples, but that they numbered exactly seventy, as Luke states, is not probable. Jesus appears to have kept the inner circle of disciples near him, while the others, like the twelve upon their first missionary journey, were training themselves in independent action. He devoted his attention specially to the apostles, it being most essential that their religious and moral character should be well founded, and they themselves fortified against the temptations to faint-heartedness and unfaithfulness. Even their progress was very slow; when left to themselves they advanced with faltering steps. They made attempts at healing, and were not always successful. They defended the new teaching against the Pharisaic theology,³ and did not always keep their ground. Their inaptness, their want of insight, their uncertainty was the beginning of the *sufferings* of Jesus upon his journey to Jerusalem.

¹ Luke x. 1.² Mark x. 1; Matt. xix. 1.³ Mark ix. 14.

Why was it that even the most able of the apostles were so slow to understand their calling? It was extremely difficult for them to conceive of *suffering and death* as the destination of their master. They had gradually learned to revere and esteem him as a prophet, as a man mighty in word and deed, as the founder of a pious community from among the ill-used and oppressed people. When he stood before them on the mountain transfigured, surrounded by the splendour of a Divine glory, they were filled with holy fear and sacred rapture. They trusted then that they would be able to suffer and die with him. But afterwards, the nearer the decisive hour drew, the more they lost courage to bear steadfastly the fate that was before them. They had had no idea of finding the Messiah in Jesus; and when at last they saw realized in him the highest ideal of the nation's hope, they beheld a Messiah who contradicted all the expectations in which they had been brought up. Those were hours and days of sore inward conflict which Jesus could not and would not spare them, although he saw more and more clearly that there was one of the disciples who would not come forth from these trials victorious. The nearer the time came to set out for Judea, and the less the disciples could conceal from themselves that the work of Jesus there would be attended by the most serious dangers, in which they would have to share, the more did their disquiet increase and their failing courage disable them for influencing others. These misgivings and waverings explain why the disciples were unable to heal a person mentally diseased.¹ They lacked the exultant vigour and self-confidence of faith which alone is able to restore body and soul to health when thus shattered. They failed, therefore, in the right application of the means of virtue, prayer and fasting—the intimate communion with God, and the self-restriction in the use of earthly things, necessary to vigorous moral action,² without which that purification and elevation of the inner life is not reached, which alone makes able to exercise a soothing and healing influence upon perturbed and suffering minds.

2. By this education for independent activity the disciples had become more self-reliant; their labours on behalf of the Divine kingdom had daily brought home to their consciences that a great work was laid upon them, and though they had

¹ Mark ix. 17; Matt. xvii. 15; Luke ix. 38. ² Mark ix. 29; Matt. xvii. 21.

not attained to full clearness in regard to its highest end, they felt themselves stimulated by it. This state of their minds Jesus sought to render conducive to *new and higher enlightenment*. Before departing for Judea he gathered them therefore around him in Capernaum, the first scene of their labours, and delivered to them a series of instructions, attention to which would give them comfort, strength, and true confidence in the conflict with the stern difficulties which awaited them.

Let us bear in mind that *humility* was the principle that had moulded the character of Jesus. This it was that protected him at the very outset of his public career from the temptation to self-exaltation. It opened his heart to the poor, kept strong his sympathy with the oppressed, the lowly, and the suffering of the land, made it possible for him to condemn all the show of worldly honour and take upon himself shame and obloquy in order to bring to the people the solace of a better future, and establish among mankind the kingdom of truth, righteousness, and love. His disciples too could only become effective instruments in the service of his kingdom after having taken up into themselves the same spirit of humility. Their danger of self-exaltation had greatly increased from the moment Jesus was recognized by them in his Messianic dignity. Ambassadors of the Messiah, his confidential ones, his first officers of state—what a seductive charm for Galilean fishermen in such a thought! In setting before them an ignominious death as the result of his Messianic labours, he possibly meant, so they thought, only to try their fidelity; he could not be serious. Their future occupation and position in the kingdom of God formed the chief subject of conversation among them after the last disclosures of Jesus. For what purpose, then, had they received the gifts and powers of the Spirit? To what end were they to labour and expose themselves to so many troubles and dangers? The reward must come; and for which of them was the *highest* position in the kingdom of God designed? They inflamed one another with their ambitious projects; it came to strife and bitter words.¹ Jesus had long perceived these ambitious hopes, and now, before the decisive journey to Jerusalem, duty required him to speak seriously to them on this matter.

¹ Mark ix. 34; Luke ix. 46; Matt. xviii. 1.

The root of their delusion was *pride*. Before they had achieved anything of importance, they over-estimated their power; before they had sown they would reap; before they had made the sacrifice they would have the joy. Jesus sought to bring them to self-knowledge by making them ashamed. They were to be convinced of their error, not by words, but by an example. He placed a child in the midst of them, took it into his arms, and declared that *childlikeness* was the indispensable condition of all fruitful activity in his kingdom. 'Whosoever desires to be first must be last of all and servant of all.'¹ The ambition of the disciples was to be governed by this rule. By disputing about rank they showed that they had not yet rightly comprehended the nature of the kingdom of God. In that kingdom there are no degrees of external power and rank; all its members are united by the bond of *perfect equality*. One may indeed distinguish himself above another, but not as under the Old Testament theocracy, not as in the kingdom of the Messiah which the Jews looked for, by exaltedness of position, but by extraordinary moral activity. *Self-denial, self-sacrifice*, devotion of person and possessions to the service of humanity, is the way to the highest honour in the kingdom of God. Such is the meaning of the word of Jesus when he calls upon his disciples to be converted and become as little children.²

Childlike love and esteem for the childlike mind form a striking trait in the character of Jesus himself. It certainly is not in harmony with the supposition that he considered human nature essentially depraved, and required from every man a complete change of nature. His exhortation to become like children rests, beyond all question, upon the supposition that human nature in the child is as yet undepraved. Selfishness and pride, the two fundamental faults of the grown-up man, have not yet twined themselves round the heart of the child, and evil inclinations, though slumbering, have not yet awoke into passions or grown into vices. In the eyes of Jesus the child is emphatically the type of humility; it prefers no claims yet upon men and upon life, is happy in the circumstances it is in, however humble and lowly. This childlike mind Jesus required above all things of his disciples, that they might be efficient instruments in his kingdom.

¹ Mark ix. 35.

² Matt. xviii. 3.

The hierarchical party derided the idea; they had reared a proud edifice, founded upon ambition and selfish enjoyment, and the future kingdom of Messiah, for which they longed so passionately, was to gratify these passions in a far more abundant measure than the Old Testament theocracy had done. In direct opposition to this, Jesus established his community upon the virtues of self-surrender and cheerful self-sacrifice; and as he himself from the first always served others, making no claims upon any one, so he enjoined upon his disciples to seek their true glory and highest honour in the constant humble service of their countrymen and of mankind.

It is commonly understood that Jesus judged the position in which the disciples stood towards his kingdom from the idea they had formed respecting his person. He certainly required from them, as well as from every one about to join his cause, *faith in his person*. But by this faith he did not mean an opinion, an intellectual apprehension, but the disposition and tendency of the whole mind and heart. Whosoever was resolved to join the kingdom of God announced by Jesus, could do so only with a good conscience, in the full conviction that Jesus had commission and authority from God to establish such a kingdom, and must recognize him as the ambassador of God in the highest sense of the word. And whosoever joined him now, since he was acknowledged as the Messiah, must free himself from the traditional Messianic expectations, and hail Jesus as the one whose mission was to offer himself a sacrifice for the salvation of his people and mankind. That those who joined him should come with willing minds and confiding hearts he certainly demanded, but for his own person he claimed no special honour or glorification. He was meek and lowly in heart. When he, upon the occasion just referred to, pronounced childlikeness the first mark of a true disciple, he proved his humility in demanding for his person no more special honour or acknowledgment than for all others possessed of a similar childlike spirit, and in esteeming a friendly office done for the least of those belonging to him as highly as if he himself had been the object of it. Never and nowhere did he desire or demand exclusive homage for his own person. Every susceptible childlike mind in the kingdom of God, though only in the least degree manifesting its higher endowment, had

for him priceless worth and infinite significance. The kindness shown to one of the least of his he considered as done to himself. Consequently he had no wish to take the position of the head, to whom all members were bound to render submissive service. Devoid of pretension, he placed himself in the midst of his community as one with them, to take part in all that is high and holy. That in this community one person should aid the other according to ability; especially that the lowly and obscure, those who were working unobserved, not seeking to make themselves important, should be lifted up, encouraged, strengthened by the sympathy and help of all,—this seemed to him an essential object of his mission.

3. The nearer the final decision approached, so much the more must Jesus, for a special reason, have wished to keep down in his disciples further outbreaks of the proud and selfish spirit. Gentiles had already entered the circle of the evangelical community; but how offensive must so intimate a relation with Gentiles be to a Jew not yet freed from spiritual pride! Among the friends of his cause there were men of little strength of character, who, still in conflict with themselves, had not yet joined his community, and these friends standing aloof he was unwilling to lose through the fanatical zeal of his disciples. Yet the danger in this direction was not trifling; the 'son of thunder,' John, took great offence at a man who, without formally belonging to the community of the disciples, had sought to heal in the name of Jesus.¹ John had forbidden the man to make any further attempts of the kind, but Jesus rebuked the hasty disciple for so doing. The disciples lacking humility, lacked tolerance also, for pride is the common source of an intolerant spirit. Jesus immediately availed himself of this incident to enlarge the narrow views of his disciples: 'Whosoever is not against us,' he said, 'is for us.'² The man so harshly dealt with by John had acted in the name of Jesus, although probably with a very imperfect insight into the significance of his person and the greatness and importance of his cause. The man was certainly not against him; there was no fear of his joining those defamers in high places who were not ashamed to call the Holy Spirit that lived and wrought in Jesus the

¹ Mark ix. 38; Luke ix. 49.

² Mark ix. 40.; Luke ix. 50.

spirit of the Devil. Even the position of a well-wisher to the cause of the gospel is to be considered a friendly one. It is not the greater or less degree of intellectual insight regarding the person of Jesus and the ultimate aims of his work, but the goodwill, the confiding, cordial, childlike humility of the individual towards Jesus and his cause, that decides the worthiness of participating in the communion founded by him. In the case above-mentioned, this participation appeared to Jesus possible without any *formal external* connection. How important was it at that moment to prepare his disciples for such a broad comprehension and tolerant judgment of others who had a different stand-point, but were nevertheless friendly to the cause. For when Jesus had departed, and the carrying on of his work was confided to his disciples, then it would rest with them whether the community founded by him should really become the starting-point of a *new* era in the history of Israel, or should be only a new patch on an old garment. If the disciples shut themselves up again, narrow-minded, within the limited confines of Jewish tradition,—if they continued still, to a great extent, to adhere to the prejudices of hereditary religion and conventional morality,—if they did not boldly venture, with the creative energy of their Master, to break through the old forms and go back to the deepest roots of Divine truth and of the eternal life itself,—then would Jesus have taught and worked, lived and suffered in vain.

‘Whosoever is not against me is for me.’ This was said with particular reference to the Gentiles striving after truth, who were able and willing to accept Jesus, not indeed as the Messiah of Israel, but as the religious and moral renewer of mankind. This saying is apparently contradicted by another utterance, spoken by Jesus in connection with the shameless calumnies which the Pharisees threw out against him: ‘Whosoever is not with me is against me, whosoever gathers not with me scatters abroad.’¹ But there is really no contradiction; the meaning is determined by the circumstances. An individual yet unacquainted with the highest aim for which Jesus lived, but filled with confidence in his cause and love to his person—a *friend* who had not attained to a conscious understanding of the gospel, but upon whom,

¹ Matt. xii. 30.

it might be confidently hoped, the full light of evangelical truth would yet rise—it was of *such an one* Jesus said: ‘Whosoever is not against me is for me.’ Other persons, unacquainted in reality with the highest aim of Jesus, but unsusceptible of evangelical truth through inner resistance, inflamed with deep hatred against his person and his cause—*enemies* who had never taken middle ground between the parties, had never been in a state of indecision, but, from the first had decided *against* him, and who, because this determination had been made for their personal advantage, were with all the clearer consciousness *against* him—it was of *such* that Jesus said: ‘Whosoever is not with me is against me.’

The relation of the disciples to the Pharisees was no longer the subject of discourse in the last hours of their preparation for the journey to Judea, but it was their relation to the people of Israel and to the Gentiles whom the disciples were commissioned to call into the communion of God’s kingdom. In discharging this commission, the disciples were in danger of making too great demands and urging claims that could not be satisfied. As to an *intellectual* comprehension of the gospel, it was by no means the opinion of Jesus that too much stress should be laid upon it. The right direction of the conscience and heart, the *inmost germ* of the disposition, which might reveal itself in an unostentatious benevolent act, is, with Jesus, decisive as to the question of admission into his kingdom. Whosoever should give a cup of refreshing water to his disciples upon their journeys when weary and exhausted, to reinvigorate them for the service of their Master, would not fail of reward in the kingdom of God. How keen was the sight of Jesus, to descry just the hidden virtue despised by the world! How truly does he designate those susceptible for his kingdom, ‘little ones;’ and with what indignation does he speak of those who sought to exclude from his communion the lowly and obscure among the people, neither distinguished by riches nor position, by learned culture nor social gifts. Such a way of dealing would give real offence to excellent people,¹ it would confuse their ideas about the nature of the kingdom of God founded by Jesus, which

¹ Mark ix. 42; Matt. xviii. 6.

would then appear to be established for the great and for their glorification, and not a kingdom in which the smallest offering could acceptably be presented to God.

As Jesus gave himself a sacrifice for his nation and the world, so he demanded sacrifices from those who gave themselves to him and to his cause. He therefore makes a *willing self-sacrifice* a main condition of true discipleship. The sacrificial salt of suffering must be tasted by every disciple of his; it must become the purifying fire and the seasoning of the higher life. Fire and salt—the sanctification of suffering, the savour of life: these are the elements of that dark saying in Mark, ‘Every one shall be salted with fire, and every sacrifice shall be salted with salt.’¹ Personal development in the Divine kingdom advances to ever higher stages by fire and salt, by the glow of sacrifice and the power of the spirit. It was in this connection probably that Jesus uttered the saying concerning light and salt, which the first Evangelist introduces in a wrong connection.² The disciple, proved in the fire of sacrifice, becomes a light that shines forth in a world darkened by error and sin; and he who is purified by salt becomes himself a salt that penetrates mankind with a purifying and preserving power. It was only when Jesus was standing at this height, and not at the beginning of his career, that he could liken his disciples to light and salt; only when he was leading them on to independent action; only when, in the prospect of being separated from them, he set before them their mission to go forth into the world to illumine and purify it; and only at this time, too, could he have uttered the parables of the tares among the wheat, of the leaven, of the treasure hid in the field, of the pearl of great price, and of the net.³ These all point to the inevitable final conflict at hand, the sufferings of which would be great, but its happy issue certain and its reward glorious, though nothing of all this was to be hastened on before its time.

¹ Mark ix. 49.

² Matt. v. 13–16.

³ Matt. xiii. 24.

CHAPTER XV.

BEFORE THE DEPARTURE FOR THE FINAL CONFLICT.

1. AFTER the *preparatory discourses* of Jesus to his more immediate disciples in Capernaum, there is in the first two gospels an evident break in the connection of the narrative.¹ Without any explanation the scene of the labours of Jesus is suddenly changed to Judea. The original record appears here to have been imperfect, but the diligent research of Luke has happily supplied the deficiency. From a source which had become accessible to him, he has related the last eventful journey of Jesus through Samaria to Judea and Jerusalem.

Fully aware of the consequences which the transfer of his labours from the quiet shores of the sea of Gennesaret to the seat of the Jewish hierarchy and theology must have for him, Jesus had resolved to sacrifice himself for the truth of his gospel, for the salvation and peace of his people and of mankind. He had put out of sight all personal considerations, and chosen Jerusalem itself, the proud city of David and of the temple, as the scene of the final work of his life.² Before entering with his more immediate disciples upon this journey, which led through Samaria, a country hostile to the Jews, he sent out before him a considerable number of persons, probably in small parties, chosen from the larger circle of disciples, in order to exercise these fresh powers upon the new soil, and to prepare them also for the fearful events that awaited his whole community. Likewise before their departure he gathered them once more around him, and gave them such instructions as they appeared to him to need. Not a few of these utterances have been preserved by the first Evangelist and recorded in the 'Sermon on the Mount,' where

¹ Mark x. 1; Matt. xix. 1.

² Luke ix. 51.

they are only in part intelligible. They find their right place and full significance in the connection just indicated.

When at an earlier period Jesus sent out the twelve, he commanded them not to go into the way of the Gentiles, nor to enter any city of the Samaritans.¹ The first trial of their power must, in order to produce results, be made among their own countrymen; this prohibition however had ceased since Jesus had declared himself the Redeemer of all nations.

An immeasurable field of labour was now thrown open to the view of the larger company of disciples called to go forth on their mission. Not Israel alone, but nation after nation, presented itself as a field ripe for the harvest, before the eyes of Jesus and of those whom he had chosen; but how few, as yet, were the labourers in proportion to the harvest to be gathered! Samaria, through which their way led, naturally had the first claim on their activity. Here, as they passed through the country, the disciples were to carry the evangelical message of peace to the people in their habitations. Peace above all things they needed who had no communion of spirit and life with the *living* God, the God made known by Jesus. The Gentiles were without peace, and the peace of the Jews was but superficial. According to strict Pharisaical statute, Jews—and such the messengers of Jesus yet were—dared have no friendly intercourse with Gentiles and Samaritans; they were not to enter their houses, nor return their salutations, still less eat and drink with them at the same table. The principles of tolerance and love to mankind which Jesus had already set forth among his more intimate disciples were now to be put into practice by the larger company. The partition between Jews and Gentiles or Samaritans had fallen before the *Saviour of all men*. Without hesitation these messengers of peace were to mingle freely with such as were not of their religious persuasion. They were to make only one condition—an acceptance, in faith, of the salvation announced, and offered in the communion of the kingdom of God.

Jesus had *at this period* arrived at a conviction most rich in results. He was sure that the Gentile world would receive the gospel more readily and willingly than his own countrymen. How long had he been teaching in the cities of Galilee,

¹ Matt. x. 5.

and notwithstanding the admiring crowds that flocked around him, and the excitement produced by his teaching, how disproportionately small was the number of true converts! At this reflection an expression of sadness burst from his heart which glowed with love for his country. He was a true Jew. Gladly would he above all things prepare the way for the deliverance of *his* people, but they would not suffer themselves to be delivered from the spiritual and moral bondage in which they languished. The yoke of the Romans was not their greatest misfortune; far worse was the yoke of the dead-letter, the pedantry of dead forms and formulas, which held every motion of religious freedom and every utterance of moral power under the ban of the statute. Even the highest ideal of Israel, the idea of the Messiah, had become a fanciful creation, the centre of a dream of universal empire, to the realization of which all the necessary conditions were wanting. Deep-rooted and numerous as the errors and sins of the heathen world might be, wide-spread as were voluptuousness, luxury, and the wild reign of the senses, yet a conversion to a better life was sooner to be expected from heathen levity than from Jewish pride sunk in dead orthodoxy. Jesus, therefore, cherished better hopes of Tyre and Sidon—those central seats of heathendom—than of Capernaum, the starting-point and centre of his redeeming activity in Galilee.¹

2. Before setting out for Judea, Jesus waited for the return of some of the larger circle of his disciples, in order to hear their report of the mission. They brought him most cheering accounts. He was the more rejoiced to receive this intelligence of the results of their labour, as they were pledges to him of his ultimate victory over the dark powers of hierarchical despotism, theological pride, and deep-rooted hatred to truth, in the decisive conflict in which he was about to engage. Before he parted for ever from the accustomed sphere of his labours, which had grown so dear to him; before he quitted the home of his youth, the smiling shores of the lake of Galilee, and left so many well-known and familiar friends, in order to make the last sacrifice for the work of his life—he withdrew, with his more intimate disciples, to one of the quiet spots where he had so often rested

¹ Luke x. 13.

from the fatigues of his labours and the cares of his calling. Here, with his confidential ones, he spent one of the most impressive hours of his life. An extraordinary feeling of triumph took possession of him. Now, when the worst that could befall a human heart and human life was before him, his heart became light. All wavering was at an end—all consideration banished—all uncertainty gone. Already, in spirit, he had conquered the foe. He saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven.¹ It was the hierarchical party, its inevitable extreme opposition to him, that he regarded as essentially broken. To call it the 'Satan,' that sought to hinder him in the execution of his redemptive work, he had a perfect right. The anticipation of the triumph, the fruits of which his disciples were especially to enjoy, fills him with gladness. Deeply penetrated by the conviction to which of old such glowing expression was given by the singer of the 91st Psalm, namely, that whosoever is under the protection of the Highest, under the shadow of the Almighty, has nothing to fear—he himself fears not the serpents and scorpions lurking in his way. He knows that the spirits of the pioneers of the world's progress will be subject to him and his followers. But what most he rejoices in is that his Father in Heaven has put his seal to the work of his life, and has 'written the names of his own' in the Book of the Living.²

With such elevation an entirely new stand-point was gained, from which the secrets of the development of the world as a whole, and of individual life in particular, were solved. It is not the visible result that determines inward worth. The claim to true dignity, to the sway over minds, rests not on external honour and official power. Life and the world are ruled by the eternal ideas of truth, freedom, righteousness, love, of which Jesus, in his immediate fellowship of spirit with God, was the representative. The relation to God himself alone determines the worth and significance of all human striving and working; salvation, therefore, is never dependent upon external conditions. Having taken this standing, man can give up outward good without regret; for the possession of the eternal supreme good can alone truly satisfy. Suffering, privation, persecution, the bitter cup of death,—all is gain if

¹ Luke x. 18.

² Luke x. 19, &c.

the jewel of truth, of peace, of eternal life is purchased therewith. Whoever has made this stand-point his own, with full conviction and thorough fidelity, is invincible. He may succumb, but he rises again to an ever-more conscious and joyful moral strength. He may die, but in death he conquers death; in chains he is free, from his prison he shakes and moves the world. This is the secret of the *new* doctrine which Jesus teaches, of the *new* life which he kindles. Through faith in the supreme good, and through willing self-sacrifice in the service of eternal life, as shown in Jesus, there has been born into humanity the richest fullness of powers before undreamed of, of which the world before Christ had no idea, and therefore could never have attained to. From the height of this faith we understand the fervent thanks to which Jesus gave utterance, as he stood among his disciples at the beginning of his eventful journey through Samaria to Judea,¹ and comprehend that he praised the Father, Lord of Heaven and Earth, because he had hidden this power of faith from the wise and prudent, and had revealed it unto babes. The first Evangelist also has preserved this passage—without, however, knowing the connection in which it was uttered by Jesus.² What appeared to Jesus as the innermost secret of the kingdom of God, worthy of special thanks, was the heroic power of devotion, full of confidence, and ready for self-sacrifice for the highest purposes of mankind, as continuously and ever-more joyfully exhibited in his own life.

But was it an occasion for praise and thanksgiving that this power had remained hidden from the wise and prudent, and had been revealed instead unto babes? Would it not have been desirable that the Scribes, the theologians, and ecclesiastics—who are especially here to be understood by the ‘wise and prudent’—should have attained to an insight of that mystery and made it their own? That remarkable thanksgiving affords a deep view into the significance of the life-work of Jesus. The Divine community of the New Covenant was to rest, not upon the learning of the schools and official authority, not on theology and the clergy, not on privileged classes, but on *childlike faith* and the *humble love of the people*. It was to be built, not from *above downwards*, by the

¹ Luke x. 21.

² Matt. xi. 25.

- hands of the mighty and influential, but from *below upwards*. It was to grow from the goodwill and pure disposition of those who were without might and influence—a genuine natural plant of our Heavenly Father.

By the 'babes' Jesus does not mean only his followers of Jewish descent. In choosing this expression, he had in mind the Samaritans also, and Gentiles, to whom thenceforth the Divine kingdom was to be announced. They who would fain fashion all arrangements in the Christian Church from above downwards, have never duly pondered the thanksgiving of Jesus. It would show them that he put his trust in the middle and lower classes, weak and defective in many respects though they were; while from the privileged classes, from learned institutions and spiritual dignitaries, and especially from the ecclesiastical régime of his day, he hoped and expected nothing, but had everything to fear. It may well surprise a superficial judgment that Jesus should see the fulfillment of the Divine purpose in the world, and of the plan of salvation, in the fact that the bearers of ecclesiastical power, the guardians of the traditions of the Church, had no appreciation and no understanding of the new state of things which he introduced, while the childlike mind of the people, the unprejudiced understanding of the laity, was open to receive it. *From below*, almost always, the way is prepared for new epochs of development and progress in the sphere of religion and morals. They spring from the fullness and energy of the robust living spirit of the people, after the higher classes, in consequence of spiritual and moral decay, have become incapable of creating anything new, and, in their selfish attachment to their privileges, are averse to all change.

3. Upon *one point* it was necessary, before setting out for Judea, that Jesus should be more distinctly understood by his disciples. It was only by degrees, as we have seen, that he came to the full consciousness of his destiny as the Saviour of the world. His disciples had not by any means kept equal progress with him in inward development. If they had at last recognized in him the most exalted personality of which, from their national Jewish point of view, they were able to conceive—the Messiah—still everything depended upon the question what they thought the destiny of the Messiah to be. Only as accommodating himself to the ideas and expectations of the people and of his times was it

that Jesus assumed the title and dignity of a Messiah. It cannot be too often repeated that it could not possibly be his destiny and determination to be a Messiah—*i.e.*, a theocratic king, in the Old Testament sense. Rather was he destined and determined to dispel for ever the dream of a theocratic-Messianic kingdom of the future. But a germ lay hidden in the Messianic idea, which perfectly justified Jesus in transforming it into *his* sense, and into accordance with *his* views and plans of life. The Messiah, above all, was to be a Liberator and Saviour of his people: furnished with Divine power and royal consecration, he, as the representative of God upon earth, was to found a kingdom embracing the world. Commissioned by God, he was to establish a community of the 'Holy God' among the nations. And thus, according to the highly symbolical Oriental mode of speech, he was the 'son of God,' begotten and anointed of God himself, a man in whom God was well pleased. The error in the Jewish idea of the Messiah lay only in the fact that the Divine Messianic kingdom was conceived of as an external institution, and was expected to be established through the agency of external means. But of all who had ever spoken to man in the name and authority of God, Jesus was the most profoundly conscious of spiritual and moral fellowship with God. As a Godlike man, anointed with the Spirit, glowing with the holiest love, and inspired by the Divinest thoughts, he felt himself the true fulfiller of the Messianic idea. As Mediator between God and humanity, as the highest personal organ of the revelation of God's will and love, as the unique son of the Heavenly Father, who has created all men for his children, as the firstborn brother alike of Samaritans and Gentiles—such he now recognized himself to be. And to offer to all, from the source of highest truth and eternal life, that which belonged to their peace, and to offer it first of all through the Jewish nation, cleansed and sanctified by him, was what had now dawned fully upon him as the supreme purpose of his calling and of his life. But as, in all his teachings concerning himself and his work, he avoided laying down theological dogmas, and always aimed directly at practical moral ends, so did he in those lofty utterances of his, concerning *his* personal dignity and significance, which he addressed to his disciples at that impressive moment of setting out for Judea.

‘All is delivered to me by my Father,’¹ said he to his disciples—words which, without the necessary restriction, could have no meaning, or only the wholly inadmissible one, that the Father, since sending the son upon earth, reserved no power for himself! But the connection necessarily refers the ‘all’ to those things which in the Providence of God had been ‘hidden from the wise and prudent,’ and revealed unto babes—namely, the carrying out of the work of redemption, the establishment of the Divine kingdom through the power of suffering for the sake of the supreme good. That Jesus should undertake and accomplish this great work, was the eternal will and plan of the Lord of Heaven and Earth.

But Jesus was profoundly convinced that the great work assigned him by the Father could be accomplished only by virtue of his personal qualities, and by such an intimate relationship with the Father as is not repeated in any other being. ‘No one knows who the son is but the Father, and no one knows who the Father is but the son, and he to whom the son will reveal it.’² As is evident from this remarkable declaration, the establishment of Christianity in the Jewish and Gentile world became possible only when, with peculiar clearness and creative power, a *new consciousness of God* had formed itself in the person of its founder. It is true God (Jehovah-Elohim) was acknowledged in the Old Testament period as the Father of Israel and Ruler of the nations, and borne witness to by the Holy Scriptures. But in this representation there was no living perception of the thorough spirituality, universality, and love of God. God was honoured and loved specially as the God of Israel, revealing himself within the limits, which he himself had set, of theocratic ordinances and institutions. Jesus freed the consciousness of God from all forms and limitations. He first proclaimed God as one before whom no personal dignity, no official position, no ecclesiastical or priestly privilege, no time-honoured tradition or statute, has any worth, but only the inmost disposition, faithfulness to conscience, purity of heart, a faith full of power. God becomes really known—according to the teaching of Jesus—by earnestness of conscience, purity of heart, fervour of faith; and God’s life reveals itself, in those who seek him, through immediate,

¹ Luke x. 22; Matt. xi. 27.

² Luke x. 22; Matt. xi. 27.

living, spiritual communion. All other intervening mediums only darken and distort the image of God in man. As no other ever had done, did Jesus, as a living spirit in its original power, see God. His consciousness of God was not taken from the dim mirror of tradition, in the broken rays of school-theologies, aided by the phraseology of religious parties. From the mysterious depths of his own self-consciousness, from the purest and most secret revelations of his spirit, he became conscious of God as his Father. He has communicated this consciousness in all its freshness to his Church, and by it disclosed the nature and truth of God to humanity itself.¹

4. It is accordingly an extraordinary and unique personal character that Jesus attributes to himself in the above expression, but we must take care lest we put more into it than Jesus intended by it. That he attributed to himself a wholly new consciousness of God, the most intimate and indissoluble fellowship with God; that he regarded this, his personal character, as an inexhaustible source of revelation and life to mankind—so much is beyond all question. But he has not therefore claimed for himself Divine power and dignity—has not asserted that he was possessed of the attributes of Omnipotence and Omniscience—has not placed the ‘Son,’ as a second equally Divine Person, by the side of the first, ‘the Father.’ That nothing was further from his thought than to make such a claim is certified by a word uttered on the same solemn occasion, and preserved by the first Evangelist alone, who probably took it from the ‘Collection of Sayings.’ Jesus is in this gospel reported to have turned from the small circle of his immediate disciples to the larger company of those who were susceptible to the Divine kingdom. He called them, as the weary and heavy-laden, to come unto him. Upon their shoulders the Jewish priests and Scribes had put the yoke of heavy statutes, and thus increased the burden of their life. Jesus invited them to take upon them *his* yoke. Long years of bitter experience had made them see the pride, the self-exaltation, the selfishness of the caste of priests and theologians, who, considering themselves the God-ordained guardians and guides of the people, used them for their own advantage. ‘Look to me,’ says Jesus; ‘I am gentle and

¹ See Appendix, Ill. 18.

lowly from the heart.'¹ As I am, so is the burden I impose—gentle, and not oppressive. How could he have possibly spoken thus, had he claimed for his person Divine power and Divine knowledge? Only a man who has to combat anger can call himself 'gentle;' only a man exposed to the temptation of pride can call himself 'lowly.' He could appropriately use such language who, in intimate spiritual communion with God, discerned most clearly the truth, the holy will and the love of God, and was called to make known this truth, this will, this love to mankind; he could speak thus whose work it was, upon the ruins of a decaying order of human life and the world, to establish a new state of things; thus could he speak as a divinely endowed and commissioned man, but—not as God.

That he had brought the germ of a new life into the development of humanity had now become to him an unquestionable certainty. The path on which he had entered was the only way to the deliverance of mankind. Well might he say that happy were the eyes that beheld ~~this~~ sunrise, and the ears that caught the ~~rustling~~ of this spring-time. The most illustrious prophets, the devoutest kings of Israel, had seen and heard nothing like it. A new age had dawned—an old world was in process of dissolution. What signified the sufferings, the agonies, that were approaching, compared with this commanding consciousness of carrying in his God-illuminated heart the fullness of a new era, and of being the creator of a better future than princes and nations had ever yet dreamed of! To labour for this future, to bring it to pass, and determine its destinies,—this was the highest blessedness.²

¹ Matt. xi. 29.

² Luke x. 23; Matt. xiii. 16.

FIFTH SECTION.

SPHERE OF ACTION IN JUDEA.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE SCHOOL OF TOLERANCE.

1. CONSIDERING the state of variance between the Jews and the Samaritans, which had increased in intensity since the ascendancy of the Jewish school-theology had sharpened their religious differences, we cannot wonder that in one of the first Samaritan villages bordering on Judea, Jesus was refused a hospitable reception.¹ The journey was not interrupted in consequence, but the circumstance was annoying to the two sons of thunder, John and James, who were greatly offended at the rudeness with which they were treated. On this very first occasion, it became evident that they had not yet overcome the hierarchical bigotry which accounted every person not a Jew as rejected by God, and which would build up and maintain the kingdom of God, not by gentleness and love, but by stern force. In their opinion, fire ought to be invoked from heaven to consume the people of the inhospitable region.² For the justification of such wrathful zeal they could certainly refer to examples in the Old Testament scripture. To Ahaziah, a king of Samaria, who, being very sick, sought help from the idol Baal, it had been announced by the prophet Elijah, that he should be punished with death for his apostasy from the living God. The warriors sent by the king to seize Elijah were, at the prayer of the prophet, consumed by fire from heaven.³ The two disciples would fain have called down from heaven a

¹ Luke ix. 52.

² Luke ix. 54.

³ 2 Kings i. 2.

similar judgment upon the inhospitable Samaritans. How difficult had it been for Jesus, even up to this hour, and notwithstanding his oft-repeated, most loving endeavours, to soften the hard hearts of his disciples! What deep roots had their fanatical zeal for tradition struck into their natures! How wanting were they still in patience with the erring, and how prompt to think only of punishing and destroying! They were not yet able to understand that the kingdom of Jesus was a kingdom of faith; that faith is not brought about by wrath, and cannot be maintained by compulsion and punishment; that it springs from humility and love, rests upon free cordial conviction, and is strengthened and confirmed only when tended and nourished by a pious childlike mind.

Deeply saddened, but also highly indignant, Jesus turned to the zealots, and rebuked their foolish unmerciful severity.¹ Still unable were they, at times, to raise their views above the Messianic representation of the Old Covenant. Still, occasionally, the form of their Master was eclipsed by a vision of the king who was to 'break the heathen with a rod of iron, and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel';² of the Mighty One that 'holds judgment, fills the places with dead bodies, and wounds the heads over many countries.'³ They had heard, certainly from his own lips, that he had come not to rule over others, but to serve them—not to make suffering for others, but to suffer for them. Only a short time ago he had disclosed to them, as the secret of *his* Messianic calling, the suffering he was to pass through, the sacrifice of his life that he was to make. But what their ears had heard, and their consciences approved, had not penetrated their hearts, and relapses into Jewish fanaticism were the inevitable consequences.

Unreserved service in the Divine kingdom, unconditional devotion to God's will, entire renunciation of all private interests, came extremely hard to the disciples; for serving is always associated with suffering. Another incident of the last journey through Samaria shows us particularly why Jesus had to insist so peremptorily upon his demand for serving and suffering from those who would attach themselves to him and to his cause. Not a Scribe, as the first

¹ Luke ix. 55. Consult App. III. 19.

² Ps. ii. 9.

³ Ps. cx. 6.

Evangelist erroneously states,¹ but a Samaritan, as the third mentions,² impressed by the evangelical preaching, sought to become a disciple of Jesus, and by this declaration certainly proved that not all the Samaritans thought like the inhabitants of that inhospitable village. But he seems to have been wanting in a deep insight into the life-purpose of Jesus. For when Jesus, not concealing from him what, under the present circumstances, awaited his disciples, declared that he himself was on his last journey, that he had left house and home for ever, that the beasts of the field and the fowls of the air had a comfortable and enviable lot in comparison with his³—the man retracted. Jesus had now to require, of those who were resolved to share his lot, not only tolerance towards others, but also resoluteness to endure all possible hardships themselves.

These circumstances explain the apparent harshness with which he treated two other Samaritans whom he had summoned to follow him. The state of things had become very different from that existing during his abode in Galilee. Now it had become actually necessary for every one who would follow him to separate himself from house and hearth, from nearest and dearest, and to be prepared for the worst. Now he was approaching the last momentous crisis in a sphere of action, when an abode of his own, home-ties, friends, a population for the most part well-disposed, no longer afforded a certain sense of comfort and protection. He was now entering a position where the dark powers of hatred and persecution pointed at him their poisoned weapons, which could hardly miss their aim.

He must now require of every one who would join him, the most positive and unreserved devotion, a willingness for self-sacrifice that knows no limits. To one who wished, before joining him, to discharge the last offices to the nearest relative, Jesus now said, 'Let the dead (those whom the proclamation of the Heavenly kingdom does not awaken) bury their dead ;'⁴ give up the last loving pressure of the hand ; for the entreaties, the tears of thy loved ones may shake thy resolve wholly to devote thyself to the kingdom of God ; suffer, endure this pang ; loose the dearest ties for the holiest ; give up the most precious earthly good for the highest good—

¹ Matt. viii. 19.

² Luke ix. 58.

³ Luke ix. 57.

⁴ Luke ix. 60 ; Matt. viii. 22.

for that heavenly treasure which alone can bless thee.¹ It is no doubt to be regretted that the third gospel has preserved only these scanty notices of the journey through Samaria. But even from these few incidents we gather that this journey was a school of tolerance for the disciples—that from its very beginning they were exercised in the giving-up of their own, in bearing with others, in self-command and self-denial.

2. The fourth gospel, however, has handed down to us another event that occurred on this journey, which bears on its face the seal of credibility. Wearied with travelling, Jesus arrived at the so-called well of Jacob, near the city of Sychar, and there fell into an animated conversation with a woman who came there for water. The fourth Evangelist is obviously under the erroneous impression that this incident took place during a journey made by Jesus homewards from Judea to Galilee, according to his mistaken supposition that Jesus frequently passed to and fro between Galilee and Judea. But the fact that Jesus at once announced himself as the Messiah to the woman,² shows that the incident related occurred on his final journey through Samaria to Judea. Before his preparation for this last journey he had not made any communication concerning his Messianic character, even to his most intimate disciples. But the journey through Samaria to Judea he had undertaken after having declared himself the Messiah, ready for suffering and death. And in this connection we come to understand the words, 'the fields are white to harvest.'³ The disciples who had not sown were now to reap. He was to leave the field of labour, they were to enter it. And the last disciples, the apostles of the second mission, were those whom Jesus had in mind when he said, 'Other men laboured, and ye are entered into their labours.'⁴

In the conversation with the Samaritan woman the keynote is struck of all that Jesus said and did upon this last journey. What he then said may be pronounced the loftiest vindication of tolerance. How perfectly human, how en-

¹ Luke ix. 61.—The incident, Matt. viii. 18, does not belong in the connection, but fits into the last period of the public life of Jesus. At the time in which Matthew places it, Jesus still had his own home, and therefore could not say that he had not where to lay his head.

² John iv. 26.

³ John iv. 35.

⁴ John iv. 38.

tirely free from all Jewish prejudices, is he in this conversation with the woman of Samaria! How gently does he treat her grave feminine transgressions! With what magnanimity does he express himself in regard to the nature of the worship of God and its manifold forms! Whether at Jerusalem or Gerizim is in reality indifferent. The value of the worship does not depend upon place or external form. The true divine worship is in the inmost being of man, in his spirit and heart. The life of the spirit, the fellowship of the spirit with God, the mind devoutly occupied with truth and its supreme Divine source—this is the true worship.¹ This spiritual and moral character of divine worship is the necessary result of that new consciousness of God which Jesus unfolded to humanity, that perception of God as the Infinite Spirit.² With this knowledge, the stand-point of the ante-Christian religions, the principle of religious separation and exclusiveness is given up and overcome—the religion of mankind and humanity is established. Samaritan, Heathen, Jew, are alike children of the Heavenly Father, and the Messiah is the ‘Saviour of the world.’³

3. How long Jesus tarried with his disciples in Samaria cannot be determined with certainty. The various incidents of this journey which have been preserved do not admit of the idea that it occupied only a few days. He gathered, we may suppose, a small Samaritan community, for the Samaritans were not wanting in susceptibility to his gospel. The impression which this journey left upon his mind is most powerfully reflected in the parable of the humane Samaritan.⁴

His arrival in Judea created doubtless no slight sensation; the leaders of the theological schools, and the representatives of the ecclesiastical power anxiously watched the appearance of the man, so feared and so admired, in the place in which their power and sway had hitherto been unquestioned. A year may have passed since Jesus began his work in Galilee; in a few months would come the Feast of the Passover, and then, as he saw with growing clearness, the crisis would not long be delayed. His opponents doubtless shared this presentiment. They had already for some time been seeking occasion for legal proceedings against him. Such an occasion they might have found had they not stood

¹ John iv. 23.

² John iv. 42.

³ John iv. 24.

⁴ Luke x. 25.

in awe of the spirit, the courage, the greatness of soul, the popularity of Jesus; and, as cunning politicians and ecclesiastics, they were resolved to move safely in their designs. Hardly had they heard that Jesus had entered Judea, when they despatched an individual versed in the law, instructed to involve him, if possible, by subtle questions, in a contradiction with the requirements of Mosaic Law. *He was to be accused and condemned as a transgressor of the law of the fathers, as an offender against what Jews accounted holy.* The emissary enquired of Jesus the way to eternal life, trusting to receive an answer that would give a handle for a malicious construction. Jesus gave the Scribe no answer, but made him answer the question himself out of the law. He forced from him the confession that the way to eternal life was the exercise of perfect love towards God and our neighbour.¹ Although thus defeated in the main object, the questioner thought there was still a point left through which Jesus might be ensnared. The law decided who is the *neighbour*—for a Jew it was a Jew. What Jesus thought upon this point his opponents well knew from many striking things that had lately come to their ears. His free and friendly intercourse during his journey through Samaria with this heretical people; his explicit declaration that he was not only the Messiah of the Jews, but of the ‘world;’ his large-hearted views of truth, freedom, and spirituality of the worship of God; his warning with regard to orthodox zeal against so-called heterodoxy—all this was known to the spies sent by the high spiritual authorities of Jerusalem. Ought it not then to be possible, upon such a ground-work, to build an accusation against one whom they so hated? If he dared to say outright that the Gentile also, or the Samaritan, was his neighbour, then was he convicted of contempt for the inviolable tradition of the fathers, and of a want of respect for the sacred prerogatives of the Jew.

But neither Jew, Gentile, nor Samaritan is declared by Jesus to be the ‘neighbour.’ He relates a parable of *a man*.² A ‘man,’ upon the road leading from Jerusalem to Jericho, falls among robbers, who plunder him, wound him, and leave him half-dead in the road. Certain *Jews*, and even representatives of the ‘pure doctrine’ of correct-believing ecclesiasticism, a consecrated priest, and a Levite learned in

¹ Luke x. 27.

² Luke x. 30.

tradition, going that way, see the unfortunate man and indifferently pass by, unconcerned about his further fate. A *Samaritan* travelling that road, also sees the man, takes pity on him, binds up his wounds, and generously provides for him until he is completely restored. The *Samaritan* proves himself neighbour to the unfortunate *man*—neighbour not as a Samaritan, but as a tender-hearted, *humane man*.¹

This parable could have sprung only from the height of the Messianic consciousness of Jesus. It expresses the deepest and most comprehensive import of the Divine kingdom which he established. From the elevated point of view at which this parable was conceived, all the narrow limitations of confessions of faith vanish, and there appears, as the true religion leading to eternal life, the *religion of pure love to man*, cleansed from the prejudices of creed, class, office, or nationality—the religion of true humanity. Let it not be said that in this parable Jesus takes only a moral, not a religious, stand-point. Does he not teach here what we are to do to inherit *eternal life*?² And it is religion that leads to eternal life. In the parable of the good Samaritan he has pronounced holy for all mankind *the religion of true humanity*, and has declared himself the *Saviour of all men*. The priest and the Levite, on the other hand, are the everlasting types of that heartless zeal for creeds which, while contending for the dead letter, leaves with indifference a brother to perish in want and misery; and while busying itself with Jews, Turks, Heathens, Catholics, Protestants, Reformed or Lutheran Churches, &c., forgets that God has created *the man* and that Jesus redeemed *the man*. Love to man purified from sectarian, feudal and national prejudices—this, according to the express testimony of Jesus, is the way to eternal life.

4. It was at this time that Jesus became intimately acquainted with a pious family at Bethany. Two sisters, Martha and Mary, had charge of the affairs of the household. During his abode in Judea, Jesus appears to have availed himself repeatedly of their hospitality, and, when exhausted by the day's burden and heat, to have found rest in their congenial company. Both sisters loved and revered him, but each stood in a different relation to him. The elder most probably of the two had not yet a right appreciation

¹ Luke x. 37.

² Luke x. 25.

of him. She beheld in him a great prophet; perhaps she placed her hopes in him as the Messiah, the national saviour and deliverer; but the secret of his coming sufferings had not yet become clear to her. When, a few days after his arrival in Judea, he entered their hospitable house for the first time, the two sisters showed at once their respective peculiarities of character. Martha prepared a bountiful meal, and was vexed with Mary, who, instead of helping her, was absorbed in conversation with Jesus, listening attentively to his words. Harshly and intolerantly Martha judges her apparently indolent sister. Here again Jesus enjoined tolerance. In the significant words, 'One thing is needful,'¹ Jesus points away from a restless, and in reality useless, activity to that which alone endures, and truly satisfies the heart—the free child-like mind, opening itself with unassuming love to receive the germ of the truth, the possession of which is the perennial source of rest and peace. There is an inner connection in Luke which unites the narrative of the good Samaritan and that of the two sisters. *The pure love to mankind* of the Samaritan, which cares not for the shibboleth of him who needs his help, and *the pious, child-like mind* of Mary, which, full of inner admiration for her guest, forgets to pay the external honour—both spring from the same source, from humble, devoted love. But this love itself has its deepest roots in a sincere God-devoted heart. Violent, blind zeal for tradition draws its nourishment from what men have *made* out of religion; from heartfelt piety, resting upon immediate communion with God, flows the spirit of considerate tenderness and kindly tolerance.

¹ Luke x. 42.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE TRUE MEANS OF VIRTUE.

1. THAT Jesus, after his last journey through Samaria, tarried some time in Judea, is also intimated by the first two Evangelists,¹ especially when they relate that in Judea, as in Galilee, he awakened a lively interest among the people, and that he taught them and healed the sick.² Such a position towards the inhabitants of the country could have existed only in consequence of his having sojourned among them for some length of time. An ordinary journey on the occasion of a national festival would have led Jesus direct to the city of Jerusalem, the scene of the festival. But he seems for a time not to have entered the capital, but to have gone first only as far as Bethany, and there in the abode of the two sisters to have found a retreat, from thence making excursions into the surrounding country of Judea as far as the shores of the Jordan. During the last weeks preceding the decisive hour, he gave particular attention to the work of further preparing his disciples, seeking to enlarge and confirm their knowledge of the nature and destiny of the kingdom of God, and to strengthen their faith, which was yet weak. He still at this time held it as one of his chief tasks to make as plain as possible to them the wide difference between his teaching and the Jewish school-theology.

The error of the school-theology or Pharisaism showed its ruinous effects in no respect more strikingly than in its teaching about the *means of virtue*. The most indispensable means of virtue in their eyes was pedantic precision in the observance of the law, and punctilious practice of the prescribed religious duties. Prayers, fastings, almsgivings, washings, offerings, all according to the letter of the ordinances, appeared to them the way to a life of perfect virtue.

¹ Mark x. 1; Matt. xix. 1.

² Matt. xix. 2.

Hitherto Jesus had not attempted to give his disciples any instructions or special directions as to the use of the means of virtue. He had prayed with them, according to need, out of a full heart, not according to any prescribed forms. Regular fasts he had not appointed, and he had given to the poor, in the spirit of the good Samaritan, according to his ability, when occasion required and the heart prompted. But now, as the day drew near that was to separate him from his disciples, when they would be wholly deprived of his counsel and guidance, he felt the necessity of instructing them particularly on these points, and of warning them against the Pharisaical appearance of piety and the mask of virtue by which the inexperienced are so easily deceived.

2. The disciples themselves appear to have sought such instructions. They desired from the lips of their Master a short comprehensive prayer for their use, which should contain all that they had daily need to pray for. Not as a fixed form or as the only proper form of prayer, not as a pattern or so-called model prayer, but only to show how and for what a true disciple should pray, Jesus gave them the 'Lord's Prayer,' the prayer of prayers. As it was not designed to be a fixed formula, it early underwent a change of form as it circulated in the Christian community. In its original shape, as preserved by Luke from the record used by him in his account of the final sojourn of Jesus in Judea, the Lord's Prayer reads thus: 'Father, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; give us day by day our to-morrow's bread; and forgive us our sins, for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us, and lead us not into temptation.'¹ Strictly taken, there are *four* petitions in which Jesus comprises all that is worthy of being prayed for: two petitions for the furtherance of the eternal supreme good within us, and two petitions for the furtherance of ourselves in regard to physical and moral well-being. The first petition rests upon the pre-supposition that all salvation is from God, and is brought about by his finding in us a place for the hallowing of his name; the second petition rests upon the hope that the kingdom of God is continually becoming realized upon earth, and above all things has to be built up in the sanctuary of our own hearts. Jesus thus teaches his disciples to pray for the very opposite of that which con-

¹ Luke xi. 1; compare Matt. vi. 9.

stituted the objects to which the longings and the desires of the Pharisees were directed. The glorification of the Divine name by external temple-service and sacrificial ceremonials, from the lips of nations subjugated by force; the realization of God's kingdom by military conquest and forcible suppression of the heathen—these were the longed-for objects of their prayers. The last two petitions in the Lord's Prayer have reference to a subsistence and well-being worthy of man. If man is to devote his strength and courage to the supreme good with joy and with success, he needs at least a subsistence certain from to-day till to-morrow, from one day to another, freedom from the most urgent cares for his physical well-being. He needs likewise a good conscience towards God and his neighbour, the forgiving love of his Heavenly Father reflected in his own forgiving disposition towards his neighbour. Finally, he needs also to feel assured that God will not lay upon him greater moral tasks than, according to the ability given, he can perform. The conclusion of the fourth petition, that God may not lead into temptation, into assaults of sin, has its special significance in connection with the near sufferings and death of Jesus, and the strong temptation to apostasy into which his disciples would be led in consequence.¹ Thus Jesus points out for all times to his disciples, in this prayer, what their petitions should essentially be directed to. *That the earthly may be penetrated with the eternal, the natural life with the powers of the spirit from above*—this should ever be their daily and most fervent supplication to God.

But Jesus at the same time gave instructions as to the *manner and way* in which prayer should be offered. These have been taken by the first Evangelist from the 'Collection of Sayings,' and preserved—although not in their original connection.² Every prayer is to be offered *sincerely*, in a manner free from show or deception. It may well strike one as remarkable that Jesus here warns the disciples against prayer in public, against the prayers of public worship. He who knew the heart so thoroughly knew its weakness and vanity,—knew its proneness to put on a mask of piety before others. He warned his disciples therefore against the prayers of the synagogue and of the street, because one who prays there gives it to be supposed that he seeks to display emotions

¹ See Appendix, III. 20.

² Matt. vi. 5.

which perhaps have no existence in his heart. But while Jesus tells men to pray in private, he does not by any means forbid prayer in communion with others. When he taught in the synagogue he doubtless used the customary prayers, or prayed from the fullness of his heart. Still he holds it his duty to point to the dangers of making public display in prayer. He lifts his warning voice against all attempts to promote communion with God and life in God by show and pomp in public worship, by external services. Therefore he sends men to pray in the stillness of solitude. Prayer will be most sincere where there is no witness but the All-seeing God. It is not the prayer, but its result, the answer, that shall be revealed.¹

In the second place, every prayer is to be *simple and concise*. The religion of tradition would *win* an answer from God as a reward for the lavish use of words, for *labouring* in prayer. It thus imitates the folly of the heathen, and, by ringing changes of words, treats God as an ignorant idol. The Omniscient and All-wise Father in Heaven knows our true need before we utter it, and what we call the hearing of prayer is therefore the accord of the Divine will with human needs, so far as these are justified before God.

This last consideration might seem indeed to make prayer appear unnecessary and useless, as, without it, God, according to his wisdom and goodness, would give to every one as he needs. Jesus therefore teaches, in the third place, that we are to pray with *earnestness and fervour*. This quality of true prayer he has particularly illustrated by the parable of an importunate petitioner who, upon the arrival of a hungry guest at midnight, allows the friend to whom he resorts for help in the emergency no rest till he supplies him with what he requires for his guest.² This precept does not contradict the preceding one, for the earnest and fervent prayer is only heard when it is in unison with the Divine will, when not a stone but nourishing bread is asked for, not a serpent but an edible fish, not a scorpion but a nutritious egg; when we pray, not for things unfruitful, seductive, poisonous, but for that which is valuable, noble, heavenly, even the Holy Spirit.³ The true value of the prayer and the petition thus consists in the *spiritual and moral elevation of the suppliant*. The answer to the prayer, as an *external* fact, has in itself no

¹ Matt. 6. vi.² Luke xi. 5.³ Luke xi. 9; Matt. vii. 7, &c.

worth; the answer is of value only as an inward personal, moral experience, as a means of *strengthening and animating faith*.

With the description which he thus gave of true prayer, as sincere, simple and concise, earnest and fervent, Jesus directly opposed the prescriptive methods of prayer used by the Pharisees, that prayer which is in obedience to custom, which is offered with an abundance of words and phrases, with a cold and indifferent heart.

3. As a further means of virtue, Jesus at that time commended to his disciples the *true fasting*. The instructions which he gave on this head are not found in Luke's gospel, but they could not possibly have been given by Jesus in the connection in which they appear in the first gospel,¹ for, during his career in Galilee, Jesus ordered no exercise in fasting among his disciples, but reserved it for later and evil times.²

Now, after his arrival in Judea the evil days had come; the days were numbered during which Jesus was to be with those whom he loved. They must not now be wanting in the earnest state of mind which befitted the solemnity of the situation. He had now to teach them in what spirit he desired them to fast.

And here also his instructions are directed against the Pharisaic ordinances. In fasting, too, Pharisaic piety was distinguished by insincerity, externality, the affectation of sanctity. They fasted regularly and often, certain days of the week (Mondays and Thursdays). On these occasions they strewed ashes on their heads, washed neither face nor beard, dressed themselves in filthy mourning garments, omitted nothing that would give them the appearance, in the eyes of men, of being particularly pious worshippers of God. This morose and repulsive custom, calculated only to deceive, was an abomination to Jesus. His pure mind revolted with indignation at fasting imposed by authority, observed in compliance with custom and tradition, and regarded as pious and meritorious.³ He transferred fasting from an act of outward conduct to a state of *inward disposition*. Whosoever fasted was to appear like one who had arrayed himself for a feast; no one was to suspect the mourning of the heart.

¹ Matt. vi. 16.

² Mark ii. 18; Matt. ix. 14; Luke v. 33.

³ Matt. vi. 16.

Real grief, true mourning, according to the conviction of Jesus, hides itself from the eyes of strangers, withdraws into the sanctuary of the conscience and heart. The mourning which parades itself is the offspring of boasting vanity, seeking to *display* itself in a light contrary to its inward reality. How instructive is the fact that Jesus forbids even the *outward signs* of mourning! Abstaining and refraining, the renunciation of even lawful enjoyments, the keeping under and limiting the impulses and wants of the body, this may at times become an indispensable duty. But the exercise of this duty is to be discharged, not by command and prescription, but in voluntary obedience to the inner impulse, as a moral necessity. Not only is this a *duty* of conscience, but a *right* of conscience: no other authority is to interfere, no other will to decide. Thus only can it be accompanied by a salutary effect, calculated to restore the disturbed moral equilibrium. That Jesus here condemned *public prescribed* fasting is beyond all question.

It was probably in connection with these injunctions that Jesus uttered the words about the inner light, that inner soundness of spiritual life without which man is lying in darkness and sin.¹ This inner light is native to the unsophisticated conscience of every human being; but the artificial, hypocritical piety which aims only at appearance blinds the spiritual vision. Hypocrisy darkens the conscience, and with it the inborn consciousness of God, and the natural love to God. In this way the light itself becomes darkness, and the darkness appears to many as light. The piety of forms and formal utterances, which to the weak appears as virtue, is really the opposite of it; the conflict against this hypocrisy, which the weak are apt to take for impiety, is in truth virtue.

4. The *third* means of virtue, which Jesus at that time enjoined upon his disciples, was the *exercise of benevolence*, and especially the *right use of earthly goods*. A particular occasion appears to have prompted Jesus to utter an emphatic admonition on this point. Shortly after his arrival in Judea, a wealthy Jew, who, without intimate acquaintance with him, had, from what he had heard, conceived great respect for Jesus, asked him to use his authority to decide a question that had arisen between himself and his brother in

¹ Luke xi. 33; Matt. vi. 22.

relation to their inheritance. The request was made with good intention, but under grave misapprehension, and showed how difficult it was for even good men to form just ideas of Jesus. Jesus first of all availed himself of this opportunity to declare, explicitly, that such matters were altogether foreign to his Messianic calling, but with this declaration he set forth his views of the position of the members of the Divine kingdom in relation to external goods. The elucidation is the more interesting, because we learn from it his ideas concerning the value of property and earthly possessions.

It is not true that Jesus condemned wealth in and for itself. What he condemns with emphasis is trust in riches, and that desire for having and gaining which esteems the acquiring and possessing temporal goods the highest end of life. He warns his disciples, therefore, not against riches, but against *avarice*,¹ or, as the first Evangelist has it, against the idolatrous service of gold, which cannot be united with the service of the living God.² By a striking parable, Jesus shows the folly as well as the unworthiness of the worship of Mammon.³ However much a man may with endless pains amass, he has no security in its enjoyment; at any moment his life may be required of him by God, the Lord of life and death. The wise man therefore will accumulate treasures for God, *i.e.* imperishable wealth for life eternal.⁴ The right use of earthly possessions depends therefore upon the right position of the conscience and heart towards God. Undividedly must the heart belong to God; it will then regard earthly goods simply as means, valuable and of use only in subserving the highest ends.

It was at this time, probably during the last abode of Jesus in Judea, that the parable of the unjust steward was uttered. It is not so obscure as is generally supposed; the difficulty of understanding it has been greatly increased by the ingenuity of the commentators. It is in truth nothing more than an injunction to the right use of earthly goods. It was given at a time when the disciples were about to encounter the severest dangers and persecutions, and when their labours for the kingdom of God would have become wholly ineffectual if their reliance had been placed on temporal possessions.

¹ Luke xii. 15.

² Luke xii. 16.

³ Matt. vi. 24; see also Luke xvi. 13.

⁴ Matt. vi. 19; Luke xii. 21.

All the more urgent, therefore, the duty of Jesus, *just at such a moment* to instruct them in the right use of money and property. He started from the supposition that, until their reception into the communion of the Divine kingdom, they had been serving *unrighteous Mammon*, i. e. property obtained more or less by means suggested by the selfish desire of gain. To get and to have for the sake of present enjoyment had been the main aim of their labours. But upon their entrance into the community of Jesus, their position towards earthly possessions had changed; it had to become *an entirely new one* now that the final crisis was at hand. They had now to renounce the service of Mammon, and treat Mammon as the steward treated the rich man.¹ The rich man who had a steward is therefore not God but Mammon; the steward a man in the service of Mammon; and to be untrue to Mammon is not wrong, but a duty. Jesus required his disciples thenceforth to spend temporal goods no longer in a worldly interest, but solely in the service of God and his kingdom. Possessions should no longer be ends in themselves, but means for the attainment of the highest and eternal ends. Hence the disciples must have the courage to surrender temporal goods for the sake of God; for his sake they must make up their minds to bear poverty and privation. Accordingly, the declaration that no man can serve two masters, God and Mammon, finds its fitting place, as in Luke, at the conclusion of this parable.² Whosoever desires to be loyal to Mammon cannot be true to God, and he who would be true to God must break with Mammon. No relations of fidelity can exist between the disciple of Jesus and Mammon. If before entering the kingdom of God the disciple had been a faithful steward of Mammon, he was now to become *unfaithful*. He must withdraw money and goods from being used for earthly ends, to win therewith admission into the 'everlasting habitations.' *Withdraw your property from worldly interests to which it in itself belongs, and use it for advancing and spreading the kingdom of God*: this is the lesson of the parable of the unjust steward.

The example of a man who esteems worldly goods the highest end of life, Jesus presents to his disciples in the parable of the rich and the poor man.³ The rich man is the

¹ Luke xvi. 1.² Luke xvi. 13.³ Luke xvi. 19.

representative of Pharisaism lusting for earthly riches; the zeal for sound doctrine is not at variance with the desire for gold and gain.¹ The poor man is the representative of the neglected people, treated by the Pharisees with indifference and contempt. The rich man is rejected by God, not for his wealth, but because wealth has made him its slave and has hardened his heart against his suffering brothers. The poor man is received by God, not on account of his poverty, but because he has borne poverty patiently, and, resigned to his lot, has been satisfied with the humblest means of subsistence. Bringing together the precepts of Jesus in regard to the use of earthly goods, we gather from them the following rules:—1. The possession and enjoyment of earthly goods must never be the life-aim of the disciple of Jesus. 2. His highest aim should be the acquisition and possession of heavenly goods, truth, righteousness, freedom, love, and the consummation of the Divine kingdom, blessedness and life eternal. 3. Earthly goods must be spent in the service of God and his kingdom, as means of accomplishing the highest good on earth. 4. When the acquisition and possession of the supreme good is threatened, then for its sake all perishable treasures are to be sacrificed with joy.

5. With the third direction of Jesus regarding the right use of earthly possessions, there is of necessity connected a *fourth*, relating to *care and anxiety* for the future. This likewise stands in close relation to the decisive attacks which the hierarchical party were preparing against Jesus. During his abode in Galilee the disciples had pursued their ordinary avocations, though with interruptions. They had remained with their families, and were able to give the needful attention to their usual means of subsistence. Upon their missionary journey they had become in some degree accustomed to give up their daily labour and home comforts, and to leave the providing of the daily sustenance to other members of the family. But now that the scene of action was transferred to Judea, their position towards domestic concerns was wholly changed. In Judea they were dependent upon the kindness and hospitality of those who were well disposed towards Jesus. But what was to become of them when their Master should be executed as a criminal, and they themselves condemned to ignominious punishments as violators of all laws,

¹ Luke xvi. 14.

human and divine,—when their associates and friends in the faith should be overawed by threats,—when, hunted by the fury of their persecutors, they should be fugitives or in prison, in exile or in want? This condition of things, soon to be realized, Jesus had in view in these instructions: ‘Take no thought for your life.’¹ It is not the carelessness of the indifferent and slothful, but the freedom from anxious care of God-trusting and truly pious men, that Jesus here depicts with inimitable force and beauty. He might have adduced examples from the Old Testament, he might have referred to the signs and wonders of Divine Omnipotence. As he does not appeal to his own miracles, nor to the gifts and powers possessed by his disciples, it is certainly a significant indication of the little value he attached to such *extraordinary* manifestations of Divine Providence. He pointed his disciples to the *divine order in nature*, to its lower creatures, to the rapacious raven, which God feeds in spite of its little worth; to the lily, the briefly-blooming flower of the field which, in spite of its short existence, God adorns with a glory surpassing the royal magnificence of Solomon. Since God has ordered everything in the kingdom of nature thus wisely, how can he forget those who are fulfilling his eternal will in the kingdom of his truth and love? Strive but vigorously and joyfully after the highest, and the lesser will certainly not fail you.² This is the faith-inspired rule of life which Jesus gives his disciples on the threshold of the most anxious and fearful period of their lives. He did not forbid trouble and care in and of themselves; they will come of their own accord. It is only the *tormenting care* which springs from a want of trust in God, from senseless despair of the wisdom and love in the Divine ordering of the world, upon which the condemnatory sentence of Jesus is passed. The fourth means of virtue which Jesus commends to his disciples is, therefore, in all troubles and vicissitudes of life to put a steadfast, unwavering reliance upon the wisdom and love of God, which rules the world and guides men. To cherish this reliance is the privilege of the members of his kingdom.

¹ Luke xii. 22; Matt. vi. 25.

² Luke xxi. 31; Matt. vi. 33.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE CALLING OF THE GENTILES.

1. WHILE Jesus availed himself of his final sojourn in Judea to prepare his disciples for the appalling events that were at hand, he made also a last attempt to free his unhappy countrymen from the curse of theological despotism and priestly domination. His conviction had grown deeper and deeper that Israel could not fail, in the way that had now been trodden for centuries, to meet with destruction, moral and national. The hope cherished by the hierarchical party, of a speedy victorious elevation of Israel over its political oppressors, was an idle dream from which, if acted upon, there would be a fearful awakening. Salvation could only come from within; not by the weapons of the flesh, insurrection and war, but by the weapons of the spirit, by a religious and moral renewing of the collective life of the people upon the foundations of truth and righteousness, love and peace, moderation and toleration. By such weapons might even proud, mighty, but immoral Rome be humbled and conquered. A deep dissatisfaction pervaded the whole population, especially that of Judea; the fires of revolt were glimmering under the ashes. But a little time ago, certain Galileans, taken in the act of rioting, had been mercilessly slaughtered at the time of sacrifice by command of the Roman procurator, Pontius Pilate. Having arrived near the scene of this massacre and confusion, Jesus eagerly seized the occasion to warn the people, driven to despair, against such vain and fatal attempts. It was clear to him that the guilt with which the nation was stained was owing, not to the depravity of a few individuals here and there, deceived or deceivers, but rather to the general state of gradual decay; and especially was it the fault of their blind leaders. The people had certainly heedlessly thrown them-

selves into the arms of the hierarchical party; in vain had Jesus besought, admonished, and warned. They had for the most part turned their backs upon him with dissatisfaction; and particularly since he had declared the destiny of the Messiah, and therefore his destiny, to be sacrifice, suffering, and death, the larger portion of the people had gone over to his opponents. Under such circumstances, he could not conceal from himself that Israel had become incapable of fulfilling the Divine plans of salvation, of renewing the world according to the spirit of divine truth and freedom; that precisely the reverse of what the old prophets foretold about this people would in reality happen. According to their predictions, Israel, as the people of peoples, was to absorb into itself all nations and ennoble them. But the course of events was taking more and more such a direction that Israel, as a nation, was going towards its internal dissolution. This fate Jesus announced plainly in a parable. He compared the nation to a fig-tree in a fruitful vineyard. The vineyard is the symbol of the whole world. Instead of benefiting the nations, Israel withheld its strength from them; it was steadily declining into the condition of a parasite in the civil and national life of the populations of that period. For years no good fruit had been visible in this people; a last respite had been given by God, and if this also passed by without results, the vineyard must be planted anew, and the fig-tree consigned to destruction.¹

This parable of the fig-tree was, in all probability, uttered by Jesus before his last entrance into the city of Jerusalem, at a time when he had not yet given up all hope that a portion, at least, of the people might separate its fate from that of its leaders. The later tradition has lost sight of the particular occasion of the parable, and converted it into an external occurrence,² whereby the whole is rendered unintelligible. How could Jesus have seriously looked for fruit on a fig-tree at a season of the year when, in the nature of the case, it could not bear any fruit?³ How could he have cursed and given over to destruction a tree really not unfruitful, or at all events not responsible for its unfruitfulness? Can a supernatural destructive action of Jesus upon a tree be at all imagined or explained? These insuperable diffi-

¹ Luke xiii. 6-9.² Mark xi. 12; Matt. xxi. 19.³ Mark xi. 13.

culties all vanish when we suppose that the doom that threatened Israel, and which was originally pronounced by Jesus in the form of a parable, came to be represented by the later tradition, inclined to legendary exaggerations and miraculous embellishments, as if the doom had been instantly executed upon the fig-tree itself. We may yet trace the growth of the legend out of the parable. While, according to Mark, the older reporter, the destructive effect of the curse was not visible until the next day;¹ according to the later reporter, Matthew, the effect of the curse upon the tree was instantly apparent to the disciples.²

2. The more, with every hour, the hope was fading that the world-renewing religious and moral revolution would proceed from Israel as the nation chosen of God, the more confidently were the eyes of Jesus directed to the *heathen peoples* as the future nursery-grounds of the kingdom of God and centres whence the new Messianic ideas were to radiate. It appears that at this time there were around Jesus some Israelites upon whom light had dawned regarding the inevitable downfall of Israel. The enquirer in the third gospel³ does not conceal from himself that the number of Jews converted will remain proportionately small, and Jesus tells him that, although many Jews desire to be admitted into the kingdom of God, admission can be granted only to a few, as a few only were able to form a right judgment of the nature and character of the Divine kingdom. It was at this time, probably, that Jesus gave the admonition which the first Evangelist has woven into the Sermon on the Mount, namely, that through the narrow gate lies the way to eternal life.⁴ The way of the Pharisees and Scribes is the broad road; here the kingdom of Heaven is opened by means of the punctilious observance of prescribed statutes; a religious-moral renewing proceeding from within is not required. The great body of the Jews sought to reach Heaven by this convenient way. On this account Jesus now openly declares what, during his missionary journey at an earlier period to Phœnicia, and even upon the occasion of sending forth the larger circle of disciples through Samaria, he had only hinted at—that he was commissioned to *call the Gentiles* also into the

¹ Mark xi. 20. Consult Appendix, III. 21.

² Matt. xxi. 19.

³ Luke xiii. 23.

⁴ Matt. vii. 13; Luke xiii. 24.

kingdom of God, and that the Gentiles would even take precedence of the Jews.¹ The religion of the kingdom of God, this religion of the spirit, of truth and liberty, despised by Israel, that elect nation, was now declared by Jesus the *world-religion*, the *religion of the nations*.

Hence we see why, during his last abode in Judea, Jesus regarded it as one of his chief tasks to break down the prejudice that Israel alone was called to the kingdom of God. His mission would not have been truly fulfilled had he not left upon earth the impression that he was the Saviour of all nations, and that the fellowship founded by him was one in which all mankind was concerned. He had not so declared himself in Galilee; at the gates of the City of the Temple this truth must be proclaimed. In the presence of the hierarchical party he must dissipate the delusion that the circumcised Jew alone can find favour with God.

Notwithstanding the bitter hatred of the hierarchical party against Jesus, an *open and complete* rupture with them had not yet taken place. Since he had come into the vicinity of the seat of their power, it suited their purpose to lull him, if possible, into a feeling of security, so that, when everything should be prepared for the last blow, it might fall upon him the more surely and fatally. Spies and plotters surrounded him in Judea on all sides. They invited him to their houses in order to entrap him. They pretended sympathy with him, that they might discover some weak point in him. They treated him with a certain deference, that he might be led to open his lips and his heart. Invitations were not wanting even from the Pharisees, who thought that in the freedom of social intercourse he would give the reins to his tongue, and be tempted to make bold and offensive utterances against the spiritual and civil authorities.

In the account of these occurrences, Luke has not stated everything in the right order of time. It is not, however, difficult to discover the original connection. At an entertainment ostensibly in honour of Jesus, given by a leader of that party,² Jesus could hardly have healed a man suffering from dropsy, or have uttered such offending expressions as are mentioned in the third gospel.³ The healing of the

¹ Luke xiii. 29. Matthew assigns to this declaration too early a period (viii. 11).

² Luke xiv. 1.

³ Luke xiv. 7-11.

man took place, probably, before the repast; and the remarks upon the ambitious efforts of the guests after the highest places at the table were made by Jesus, we may suppose, at the conclusion of the feast and to a small circle. He used the occasion of the entertainment, however, to express in the hearing of the Pharisees, by means of a parable, his conviction that the Gentiles were to enter the kingdom of God.¹ The admonition to invite, not friends, brothers, kindred, and neighbours to a feast, but the poor, the maimed, the lame, and the blind, cannot possibly be understood literally, nor can it have been addressed merely to the host. Jesus doubtless had chiefly in mind the narrow-hearted spirit of caste and the pride of position that marked the Pharisees; he was thinking of the entire absence of kindly sympathy in the hierarchs for the poor and perishing people. But it was characteristic of orthodox Judaism, as a whole, to be exclusive and narrow. The Pharisaic Jew acknowledged as brothers only those connected with him by the tie of a common descent and religion, and looked upon the Gentiles as poor, maimed, lame, and blind—as the refuse of the human race, with whom he neither ate nor drank. To show a human loving heart to a Gentile was contrary to his religion, for such an act had no promise of future reward; only the love that he manifested to a Jew would be recompensed.²

That Jesus at that feast proclaimed, to the confusion of intolerant Pharisaism, the calling of the Gentiles into the kingdom of God, appears especially from the parable of the supper.³ This parable is probably the original form of the parable of the marriage feast, found in the first gospel.⁴ In both parables the feast is a picture of the kingdom of Heaven (in the first gospel it is a marriage-feast, signifying the establishment of the New Covenant); in both there are invited by the servants—messengers of salvation—certain persons who refuse to accept the invitation, using all sorts of subterfuges to excuse themselves. In both we find the anger of the host—God, who invites men—aroused towards these persons who refuse the invitation. In both parables there is the determination of the host to extend his invitation even to

¹ That only the parable was told during the repast Luke himself intimates (xiv. 7).

² Luke xiv. 12.

³ Luke xiv. 15–24.

⁴ Matt. xxii. 1.

such as were not properly entitled to be invited—the Gentiles. In addition, there is in Matthew an allusion to the persecutions of the apostles,¹ to the destruction of Jerusalem,² to the intrusion of unworthy persons from among the Gentiles into the kingdom of God,³ all which show the parable in the first gospel to be an amplification of what Jesus said at the feast at the Pharisee's house in a simpler form, and without any reference to events which had not then happened.

3. This extension of the original boundaries of the kingdom of God founded by Jesus, by taking in the Gentile world, was not merely a consequence of the obduracy of Israel; it was also the necessary fulfillment of the eternal Divine plan of salvation. God does not give the preference to a particular nation as the people of his salvation, but calls to salvation humanity itself. Nothing that Jesus had spoken offended the pride of the hierarchical party so deeply as his declaration, that the Gentiles were invited to share equally with the Jews in the Divine kingdom. A handle was here found which might be used with success for his destruction. Doubtless the friendly disposition towards the Gentiles, so distinctly expressed by him at a public table, soon became the daily talk in all the Pharisaic circles. He lost no time, however, in defending himself against the violent charges of the hierarchical party, and this he did in a series of parables, the most striking and most beautiful of which Luke has preserved. The lost sheep,⁴ the lost piece of money,⁵ the prodigal son,⁶ are not symbols of the people of Israel morally neglected and misled by their spiritual guides, but, according to the connection in which these parables were told, they are symbols of the Gentile world despised and hated by the hierarchical party, and regarded by them as emphatically the world of sinners. In the parable of the prodigal son, especially, the reference to the Gentiles is apparent in that this son *no longer* belongs to *the father's house*, which is manifestly not applicable to *Jewish* sinners or publicans, as their position in the household of God was held to be assured in consequence of their circumcision. The application to the *Gentiles* also appears, inasmuch as they

¹ Matt. xxii. 6.² Matt. xxii. 7.³ Matt. xxii. 11.⁴ Luke xv. 4-7; Matt. xviii. 12-14.⁵ Luke xv. 8-10.⁶ Luke xv. 11-32.

had received their inheritance from the hand of God before the theocracy was instituted, and had squandered it in a strange land, away from the father's house, away from the temple and its sanctities, from the law and its benefits, from the priesthood and its ordinances.¹ The Gentile is also strikingly indicated in the parable, by the prodigal being the younger son, whereas Israel accounted himself the firstborn of God.²

The admission of the Gentiles into the kingdom of Jesus was a necessary consequence of the loving care that Jesus felt for *sinners*, the portion of mankind morally degraded and perishing. He saw it to be one of his chief life-tasks to excite and develope the slumbering spiritual endowments and moral powers of the *people*, the middle and lower orders, who had been deliberately and heartlessly neglected by the privileged classes. The theocratic Messiah was the hero of the genteel world, the suffering Messiah the helper of the poor suffering people. The parable of the Pharisee and Publican also has a similar significance.³ The Pharisee is there the representative of orthodox Judaism, looking down with contempt upon sinners, especially therefore upon the heathen. The Publican is the representative of the Gentile world of sinners, having a humble and sincere but indistinct longing for moral regeneration. That the Publican offered his prayers within the precincts of the temple is no proof that Jesus intends to represent him as a Jew. He stood afar off; ventured not into the forecourt of the Jews; deemed himself only a stranger in the house of God. But even if we consider the Publican to be a Jew, he would still be the representative of all those whom the hierarchical party esteemed worthless and outcast. At all events, the Publican gives up the means prescribed by the Mosaic Law, whereby the Divine favour is to be obtained, and puts his trust unreservedly in the Divine mercy, and God holds him justified or reconciled to him, without requiring from him any external observance as an atonement.

The position of the conscience towards God is not determined by external observances; this was reason enough for Jesus to offer salvation to the Gentiles also. Not circumcision, not sacrifice, not ceremonial purification, not Sabbath solemnity, not fastings, but the condition of the heart, the inner

Luke xv. 13.

² Exod. iv. 22.

³ Luke xviii. 9.

life, decides every man's relation to God. The inevitable downfall of haughty orthodox Judaism, the certain elevation of the Gentile world—humble, penitent, and longing for salvation—were the chief themes of the teaching of Jesus during his last abode in Judea. The fact that he urged upon his hearers substantially the same thoughts in perpetually new shapes and applications shows how interested he was at that time in overcoming in those around him the traditionary prejudices of Jewish exclusiveness, and especially in making his disciples more and more familiar with the idea that the kingdom of God established by him, and to be extended by them, must embrace *all* nations. But he combated not only in word, but by his own example, the prevailing narrow and exclusive spirit. Passing through Jericho, he did not disdain to enter the house and partake of the hospitality of a chief publican, Zaccheus, who had shown an earnest desire to see him.¹ Zaccheus was most probably a Gentile, and for this reason those around Jesus considered him a sinner. But Jesus declared that Zaccheus also was a son of Abraham,² a fact of which, if Zaccheus had been a Jew, the bystanders needed not to be told. During the last period of his activity, Jesus looked upon the community of the 'faithful' as the true Israel, and consequently saw in every Gentile who believingly received him into his house, or his heart, a true descendant of Abraham. The same key-note runs through those discourses of Jesus, of this period, which the fourth gospel has preserved. That he had other sheep from *another* fold, that he must lead them likewise, that they hear his voice, that there will be one flock and one Shepherd,³ Jesus declares with the greatest distinctness. The desire of certain 'Greeks' to see him, which brought vividly before his mind the longing of the Gentile world for salvation, seemed to him the beginning of the glorifying of his work on earth.⁴

¹ Luke xix. 2.² John x. 16.³ Luke xix. 9.⁴ John xii. 20.

CHAPTER XIX.

FINAL INSTRUCTION OF THE DISCIPLES.

1. How MUCH had to be accomplished in the few weeks that were left for Jesus to spend with his disciples, to fit them for the great work of announcing and extending the kingdom of God throughout the world! Jesus had required of the disciples extraordinary sacrifices. Worldly possessions and enjoyments they had renounced. The joys of family life and domestic happiness they had relinquished. They had put themselves, property and life, hand and heart, at the service of their Master and his cause. After such sacrifices, they had a right to expect that he would thoroughly instruct them concerning the final aim of his and their life-task. Its general outlines they knew, but now they needed to have it set before them, as clearly as possible, in a series of *particular instructions*, and impressed upon their hearts. Jesus had founded a new community. To maintain, to cherish, protect, extend, and enlarge it, the apostles were especially called. In this work numberless dangers were to be met or prevented, immense difficulties to be put aside or overcome.

First of all, the young community was exposed to the danger of discord and division caused by offences arising among themselves, and to the danger of falling into dissolution from want of discipline. The disciples themselves were not yet spiritually and morally matured; self-will, harshness, intolerance, would therefore have the more serious effect upon the culture and progress of the new community. To obviate this evil, Jesus warned them against offence to the 'little ones,' *i.e.* to the weak among them, which, at that time, might so easily be given by the strong and the passionate.¹ The offence which in the coming time of con-

¹ Luke xvii. 2; Matt. xviii. 6.

flict and trouble was most to be feared, was an example of want of love among the members of the community themselves. Jesus therefore, with special emphasis, required of his disciples a gentle heart, always ready to forgive and to be reconciled with an opponent. The fault of the offender was not, indeed, to be overlooked—well-grounded reproof is a duty towards brothers and associates; but it should be administered always in the language of love, not in that of passion. And the party personally injured should always be ready heartily to forgive the injurer, especially when sorry for his fault, and resolved to repair it—yes, and he should forgive as often as he has occasion; and the fault, though many times repeated, was to be no bar to a continued forgiving disposition. This exhortation to forgiveness was probably not uttered precisely in the form in which it has been handed down by the first Evangelist,¹ as it presupposes an already existing, formally arranged association; but the rule that the final decision of disputes arising among the brotherhood should be referred to the members of the community collectively, is made quite in harmony with the spirit of Jesus. More difficult to understand is the declaration of Jesus that everything which they—*i.e.* the *believing community* (not the apostles as such, as the connection shows)—should bind or loose on earth, should ordain as legal or cancel as illegal, was to be considered as ordained or as cancelled in Heaven, *i.e.* before God.² That the first Evangelist makes this very same declaration of Jesus refer to Peter alone,³ is a liberty that he has taken. These words could not possibly have been spoken on both the occasions mentioned in the first gospel, as the supreme authority of the community and the supreme authority of the apostles could not exist together. The power to bind or loose, to determine upon or forbid, is granted to the *believing community* collectively. But this apparently unlimited authority is limited by the explanations immediately following—namely, that whatever two of them unite in praying for, God will grant, and that where two or three are gathered together in the name of Jesus, he will be in the midst of them. The binding and loosing, the ordaining and forbidding, is accordingly not intended to be an arbitrary,

¹ Matt. xviii. 15.² Matt. xviii. 18.³ Matt. xvi. 19. Compare p. 139.

absolute exercise of power. It has authority and effect when done not merely in a brotherly and harmonious disposition, but in accord likewise with the will of God, or in communion with the Holy Spirit.

Even the apostles could exercise their office successfully only in the spirit of self-denying humility. Against self-exaltation Jesus solemnly warns them in the parable of the master and servant.¹ Even if they do the will of God without defect, only duty is fulfilled, no manner of claim to a reward is established. This parable shows very strikingly that Jesus promised his disciples, even in the prospect of the greatest dangers and sacrifices, no other reward than that which is found in the faithful performance of duty itself.

2. But Jesus had to demand of his disciples more than duty, according to customary standards, required of them. The disturbed state of the times, the inevitable persecution awaiting them, the insecurity of their position, the unsettled state of things connected with their calling—all this, as we have already seen, had imposed upon them the necessity of breaking away from their domestic ties. The question whether an apostle might marry, had become a question of conscience. Jesus held it therefore right to instruct his disciples respecting matrimonial concerns, and their position in regard to marriage. A special occasion for instructing them in regard to the nature and dignity of marriage was afforded him, it appears, during his last abode in Judea, by the emissaries and spies of the hierarchical party. It was probably upon one of his first visits to Jerusalem that the Pharisees brought to him a woman taken in the act of adultery, and demanded of him his judgment in respect to her punishment. They hoped, doubtless, to involve him in a contradiction either with the civil and ecclesiastical laws, which in this case pronounced the punishment to be death, or with his own humane principles.² They most hoped the former, for he had just declared that he had come to *save the lost*.³ Jesus, however, did not pronounce upon the case brought before him, but simply referred it to the consciences of his questioners, by demanding that whosoever among them knew himself in his own conscience to be pure

¹ Luke xvii. 7-10.

² John viii. 1-11. See Appendix, III. 22.

³ Matt. xviii. 11; Luke xix. 10.

from the sin against chastity, should throw the first stone at the guilty woman.

The spies, touched by the voice of conscience, vanished, but only to lay new snares for Jesus. He had certainly exposed himself now to the appearance of a lax dealing with the marriage-tie. This was made use of for putting crafty questions to him on the subject of *divorce*. His opponents first enquired of him whether divorce were allowable.¹ They might hope that upon this occasion he would commit himself on one side or the other, for the theological schools were divided among themselves in the interpretation of the passage of the law referring to this point. The law allowed the husband in *certain* cases to give his wife a bill of divorce-ment.² To the question as put by the first Evangelist, 'Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?' Jesus might therefore, in entire harmony with the law, answer that divorces from 'all possible causes' were not allowable.³ But his position was more difficult if, as put by the second Evangelist,⁴ he had to declare himself in regard to the admissibility of divorce itself. And in all probability, here also, Mark has given the authentic account. As in the case of the decision asked of him regarding the woman taken in adultery, so here Jesus did not give an opinion, but led his questioners to declare their sense of the meaning and significance of the law in regard to that point. Only after they had deduced from the law the right of the husband to give his wife a bill of divorce, did he declare how little he agreed with a lax view of the marriage-tie. He had in an individual case protected an adulteress—he was ever ready to forgive the sins of the penitent—but he spoke with sharpness and severity when it came to vindicating the inviolability and sacredness of the marriage-bond against the frivolous sophistries of hypocrites. The point of his answer certainly strikes at the Mosaic Law itself. Moses, as a man, as the statesman and lawgiver of his time, having regard to the condition of his people and to a passing necessity, made a concession to the weakness of human nature. This Jesus considers as not in accordance with the *true and eternal idea of marriage*, with its Divine institution and its original

¹ Mark x. 2; compare the later account of Matt. xix. 3.

² Deut. xxiv. 1.

³ Matt. xix. 3.

⁴ Mark x. 2.

sanctity.¹ According to his conviction, divorce is, in itself, contrary to the idea and end of marriage, and the indissolubility of marriage is a moral principle. The design of the Pharisees to entrap Jesus was, in consequence of this reply, again frustrated. They had hoped to be able to fasten upon him the charge of lax moral principles, and now he had shown them that, notwithstanding the external strictness, their law and they themselves were chargeable with moral laxity.

But here arises another question—whether Jesus, in connection with this teaching about divorce, intended also to lay down a rule for the conduct of his community. It must not be overlooked that Jesus aimed only to hold up an ideal to be aspired after in opposition to the defective Mosaic Law. That he did not seek to lay down any rules as to the law of marriage as a civil matter, is self-evident; nowhere, and never, did he lay claim to a right to legislate in matters of state.² Neither did he expect to realize *immediately* in his community the ideal which he held up. In fact, he does not condemn without qualification the laxity of the Mosaic Law in regard to divorce; he suggests a special reason in excuse for it—namely, the consideration which it shows for the hardness of heart of the Jews.³ As it belongs to the original idea of man that he is good, so likewise it belongs to the original idea of marriage that it is indissoluble. But as little as man can be treated in the relations of actual life as if he had remained free from sin, so little can marriage be treated, moral and social circumstances considered, as if the hearts of the married were strangers to faults and passions.

In what he said about marriage and divorce, Jesus unquestionably had a higher purpose than merely to stop the mouths of malicious spies. It was his aim to establish a standard of morals and of life more worthy of man than any mere system of prescribed rules. The community founded by him was to stand upon the eternal foundations of truth, right, freedom, honour and brotherly love; therefore he must make the highest moral demands upon his disciples, and the earnestness, depth, and comprehensiveness of his requirements dared not remain hidden from his opponents.

To *sanctify home, the family life*, was thus one of his first

¹ Compare Gen. i. 27.

² Compare Luke xii. 13.

³ Mark x. 5; Matt. xix. 8.

objects, and for this end it was necessary to *secure respect and a worthy position for woman*. By the Mosaic law of divorce the wife was placed at the caprice of her husband; by the moral principle held up by Jesus, he would restrain this caprice, and thereby morally elevate the woman. He had no thought, however, of encroaching with his teaching upon the existing civil laws; he contended only for the principles of the Divine kingdom, and hoped to advance his principle not by way of compulsion, but by bringing about an independent conviction and free acknowledgment of the dignity of human nature, especially in the wife, by making love sacred.

3. The Pharisaic spies had retreated, no doubt confounded and angry, and the disciples had become thoughtful, for the high moral tasks which Jesus set before them disquieted their consciences. In this reflective mood they probably went home with Jesus, and as the second Evangelist states,¹ here in private resumed the subject of conversation which had been broken off with the Pharisees. There Jesus made that further declaration which the first Evangelist has put into the Sermon on the Mount,² but which has rightly been placed by the second and third Evangelists as belonging to the period of the last sojourn of Jesus in Judea.³ *Every second marriage of either of the divorced parties* Jesus pronounces adultery. That we have the original declaration of Jesus in the second gospel, is evident from no mention being there made of that exception in which, upon the ground of adultery, divorce and consequently second marriage of the innocent party is said to be permitted.⁴ According to the conviction of Jesus, *marriage is in itself indissoluble, divorce therefore inadmissible*, and the marrying again of either of the divorced parties is *real adultery*. Such is the necessary consequence of the principle set up by Jesus, and it is the later tradition which, upon the supposition of the impracticability of carrying this out in life, so far qualified the principle as to declare adultery, and that only on the part of the wife; a sufficient reason for divorce on the part of the husband.

But in so doing, the first Evangelist has not only deprived

¹ Mark x. 10.

² Matt. v. 32; but also xix. 9.

³ Mark x. 11; Luke xvi. 18.

⁴ Compare Mark x. 9 with Matt. v. 32, xix. 9. In Luke also (xvi. 18) there is an unconditional condemnation of divorce. So Paul (1 Cor. vii. 10).

the principle itself of its point, but has taken from the declaration of Jesus its essential import—namely, the liberation of the wife from the arbitrary will of the husband. The words of Jesus, pronouncing every divorced woman who contracts a new marriage an adulteress,¹ have been erroneously considered to be an addition of Mark's, because they are not found in the first and third gospels. It is just these words that express most pointedly the contrast to the Mosaic law of marriage. They proclaim the *unrestricted equality of the wife with the husband within their family*; they take away from the wife the degradation to which she was consigned, ostensibly in the name of God, by Jewish usage, and state the most important social principle of all Christian culture.

That Jesus in principle rejected divorce utterly, is evident from an addition in the first gospel itself,² probably taken from the 'Collection of Sayings,' and not found in the second gospel. The purpose of Jesus, by a very striking example to impress his disciples with the great degree of self-denial which his service required of them, was attained. They could now no longer have any doubt that in this service they must belong undividedly to their Master. They were for a moment filled with awe. If marriage had to be looked upon in such a light, it were better—so it seemed to them—not to marry at all.³ To renounce divorce under all circumstances, and to sacrifice to the sacredness of this principle the comfort and peace of one's whole life, appeared to them an intolerable demand. And were there not cases in which the principle required a self-restraint more than human, from those who had to submit to it? Jesus, in reply, certainly recommends to his disciples absolute *renunciation of marriage* itself; but nothing could be more erroneous than to infer from this that he put celibacy above the married state, and considered it a higher moral condition. He commended single life to his disciples simply on account of its suitability to their mission. In their case, surely it was a very serious matter to bind themselves permanently by domestic obligations. They must learn that, if they sought to come up to the mark of their high calling, there was no alternative for them but to give up all other

¹ Mark x. 11, 12.

² Matt. xix. 10–12.

³ Matt. xix. 10.

cares and concerns of life. It was *they* whom Jesus had before his mind when he asserted the validity of his principle in its full strength; that upon the great mass of men still under the discipline of the law the strictness of his principle was not applicable, no one knew better than he, with his thorough knowledge of men. Hence he neither concealed from himself nor from his disciples that a *special* gift is needed to the correct comprehension and right application of his principle. Only a few elect ones are able thoroughly to appreciate the nobleness and sanctity of domestic life. Only a few elect ones are able voluntarily to renounce this state in the service of God and his truth, and at the same time keep themselves pure from all stain. The moral *duty*, therefore, of the disciples is twofold: in the married state to hold marriage sacred, inviolable, pure, but also to be able to renounce marriage itself for the sake of the kingdom of Heaven.¹ It was only to his apostles, and under the *then existing circumstances* of coming trouble and persecution, that Jesus recommended abstinence from marriage. It was at this time probably that he pronounced even a look of unchaste desire, cast upon the wife of another, adultery—adultery in the heart.² And he was thus true to his character, in requiring not only abstinence from the external act, but also inner freedom from impure desires and thoughts.

4. As on account of their position in the kingdom of God, Jesus recommended his disciples to renounce the joy of family life, in itself allowable, he had to require of them once more that condition without which such a sacrifice could not be truly made, and which they were not yet able rightly to fulfill. This was the pure child-like mind which keeps under selfish impulses, and gives itself sincerely and heartily to the highest ends of life. Worldly expectations and hopes still dimmed their vision, and hindered the right understanding of the Divine kingdom and its highest aims and ends. Even in those days immediately preceding the final crisis, the vague dream of a political empire with Jesus at its head rose before them, and in strange blindness they distributed among themselves imaginary places of rank and power. They betrayed their foolish wishes even to their Master. To their ambitious enquiry, who should have the highest

¹ Matt. xix. 12.

² Matt. v. 28.

position in the kingdom of God, he replied by placing a child in the midst of them; and he would not spare them the shame, amid all their proud visions of the future, of admonishing them to become like a *child*, and to declare to them anew that a child-like mind alone enables a man to enter the kingdom of God. And he connected therewith the requirement of a thorough *conversion* to the stand-point of a child. In this 'conversion' to a child is comprehended in reality all that the gospel requires of its confessors—*religious and moral purity, truthfulness, simplicity, and singleness*. The qualities so lovely in a child are also the essential qualities of the character of the true disciple of Jesus. The Jewish system of traditions and forms had destroyed inner purity; *piety and morality* had become *artificial productions*. It was on this account that it was so hard for the disciples to become simply pious and moral. Proud hopes and extravagant expectations constantly obstructed their natural religious and moral development. To all this there must now be an end,—so Jesus distinctly declared. There was in his service nothing left for them but to become unassuming and free from self-seeking, as they once were when they were children.¹ To this end they must no longer have proud hopes for themselves, but expect to suffer. They were no longer to covet, but to resign all, to give themselves, their strength and life, to the cause of mankind. They were to learn to *humble* themselves.² In cheerfully renouncing all claims to honour, reputation, reward, they were to cherish the conviction that out of this self-humiliation, out of humble labour in the kingdom of God, springs true greatness, imperishable honour. From these last instructions of Jesus to his disciples we gather how entirely different his idea of the nature of man was from that commonly entertained.

The customary opinion represents children as poisoned by hereditary sin, as forfeited already in early infancy to the dark power of Evil, as thoroughly under the control of wicked impulses and inclinations. This is not the *idea of Jesus concerning childhood*. He sees rather in children types of moral simplicity, examples of purity of heart, living mirrors of a pure and sincere disposition. To *become* in the battle of life—consciously and of free-will—that which the child in

¹ Matt. xviii. 2.

² Matt. xviii. 4.

harmless innocence is—unconsciously and instinctively—is, according to Jesus, the highest and true destiny of his disciples.

From this we understand that love for children which he showed on all fitting occasions. How touching to see him taking children in his arms, laying his hands upon them, blessing them, and in kindly words giving the assurance of their share in the Heavenly kingdom!¹ On the other hand, the yet unchild-like mind of the disciples betrays itself in the uncharitable and arrogant way in which they repulsed those who brought children to Jesus for his blessing. ‘Such’ ought to be near me, Jesus said; they do not require to be received into the kingdom of God; *as children* they are already in it. These children had received no baptism, had been taught no catechism, nevertheless Jesus pronounced them fully-accredited members of his kingdom. The child-like mind, as such, is well-pleasing to God; innocence, freedom from pretension, humility and love, are the keys which open the gates of the Heavenly kingdom. When Jesus looked into the innocent eyes of the children, may there not have come before him the cunning suspicious looks of the Pharisees, who but a little while ago, under a bland exterior, had been on the watch to catch every word of his, that they might find grounds for a capital charge against him? All the more did the harsh behaviour of his disciples towards the children fill him with a holy indignation. How long he had been labouring to breathe his spirit into these men, and how little disposed they were to receive it, was continually making itself apparent. He himself had indeed the pure child-like mind, he sought and desired nothing for himself on earth. And it was just this that he had to require of all who sought admission to his community. ‘Whosoever receives not the kingdom of God as a child;’² whosoever refuses to serve God and his neighbour without secondary considerations and selfish aims, in sincerity of mind, with hearty love; whosoever, instead of losing sight of self, keeps only himself in view in his piety and morality, is no true child of God, although he may have the means of grace provided by the Church—priestly absolution and papal canonisation. The child-like mind could

¹ Mark x. 13; Matt. xix. 13; Luke xviii. 15.

² Mark x. 15.

alone enable the disciples of Jesus to labour without selfish, interested motives for the *spreading* of his kingdom. True piety liberates the heart from an unworthy attachment to possession and selfish enjoyment, makes willing for self-sacrifice, gives courage to suffer for the highest and eternal good, and, at the same time, makes gentle and peaceably disposed towards bitter and deluded enemies.

Immediately after instructing his disciples upon the subject of marriage, Jesus had occasion to show them, by an example, how barren the best intentions are without this child-like mind. A teacher of the law, moved by better feelings than actuated most of his class, asked Jesus about the way to eternal life.¹ Jesus pointed to the following-out of the Ten Commandments as the way. The man declared that he had been following this way, but had not found that peace which for ever satisfies the deepest want of the soul. Jesus then made the demand which only the pure child-like mind is able to comply with—namely, the unreserved devotion of all his earthly goods to the service of the Divine kingdom. This he required, not of every one who sought admission into his community, but only of those who would be fellow-labourers in his great life-work, and apostles in his missionary field. The teacher of the law was not equal to *this* requirement, for he lacked the child-like mind necessary to a prominent position in the kingdom of God.

The conversation with this teacher is of special significance in the light which it throws upon the character of Jesus. The teacher addressed Jesus at this first meeting as 'Good Master.' Doubtless it was to his no small surprise that Jesus disclaimed this appellation 'good,' with the remark that it *belonged only to God*.² It is evident why the later tradition³ took offence at this remark of Jesus, and sought to deprive it of its offensive point. The more Jesus passed in the second half of the first century from the light of history into the twilight of the miraculous and legendary, the more his *true human* form became clothed with *Divine* splendour. That Jesus should have deemed himself unworthy to be called 'good' seemed incomprehensible. If he, as it became more and more generally supposed, were of Divine nature, the 'Logos' of equal being with God, how

¹ Mark x. 17.

² Mark x. 18; Luke xviii. 19.

³ Matt. xix. 17.

could he in this pointed way distinguish God from himself, and even subordinate himself morally to God? The above expression of Jesus certainly was in the primitive documents, but the first Evangelist endeavoured to soften it down by representing the teacher of the law, who is there called 'a young man,'¹ as asking what good 'thing' he should do to win eternal life, and Jesus is made to ask, in reply, why the young man enquired of him about the good 'thing,' as there is only One who is good? This alteration of an original declaration of Jesus by an Evangelist is significant. It shows how, even before the end of the first century, religious narrowness led, in the evangelical tradition, to arbitrary alterations of utterances of Jesus unquestionably genuine. The account of this declaration of Jesus by the first Evangelist gives a wholly inappropriate meaning to it.

To the question of the teacher what good 'thing' he should do, Jesus could not possibly have answered with a 'rebuke,' and still less have remarked that only 'One is good'; in either case such a reply would have been unsuitable and without meaning. If Jesus peremptorily disclaimed the quality 'good,' as (according to the oldest tradition) he did, he could not have done so out of mere politeness or false modesty. His declining the attribute is all-sufficient evidence of his deep and earnest conviction that it did not belong to him. Only the eternally perfect One, the source of all true good, from whose fullness of life all other moral beings draw, can be called 'good' in the full unqualified sense of the word. In *this* sense Jesus neither could nor would be esteemed 'good.' Often had he felt the allurements of temptation, long had he been passing through severe moral conflicts, and had morally developed himself. He had not yet triumphantly withstood the last temptation, and won the last battle; the great trial was still before him. And if on all occasions he had come off conqueror, it had required persevering efforts, constant labour, inviolable obedience to the will of his Heavenly Father, in order, morally, more and more to perfect himself.² God alone is above all temptation,³ morally unalterable, free from all inner change, and therefore perfectly good. The explicit declaration of Jesus that the epithet 'good' did not apply to him is at the same

¹ Matt. xix. 22.² See especially Heb. v. 8.³ James i. 13.

time direct proof that he did not seek to place himself on an equality with God, as his enemies accused him of doing.¹ Before the Infinitely High and Holy One, his Father in Heaven, he bowed in profound humility, not only with regard to the human, but also to the spiritual side of his nature. Even in the fourth gospel there are preserved traces of utterances in which Jesus often, and with the greatest explicitness, declares that between his person and God, the Heavenly Father, there is an essential difference which must not be obliterated. Jesus says there, it is true, that *he gives* eternal life to his followers, 'his sheep,' while, according to the representation of the other three gospels, eternal life must be won through personal, voluntary renunciation of earthly good. But, according to the fourth gospel, Jesus omits not to add that the Father is greater than all²—i. e., is unconditionally supreme by virtue of the uniqueness and glory of His being. And by the declaration, 'I and the Father are one,'³ Jesus asserts not an equality of being, but the oneness of his will with the Father, which proves itself by his life-work and life-aim being in harmony with and well-pleasing to God. For this reason he could say also that the Father was in him and he in the Father.⁴

5. In this interview with the teacher of the law, the source of the insincere disposition was laid bare. It is the most conspicuous mark of the child-like mind that it is free from care regarding earthly possessions, free from covetousness, and is independent of the goods of this world. Love of earthly goods prevented this teacher from joining the apostles and the other labourers in the kingdom of God. Under the immediate impression of this experience, Jesus declared that the rich could hardly enter the kingdom of God—that, indeed, it was easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the Divine kingdom.⁵ This declaration not only contains a sharp reproof of the teacher of the law, but also a strikingly severe judgment concerning the spiritual danger connected with wealth in general. That the apostles should resign all earthly possessions was absolutely necessary from the nature of their work. With an unsettled wandering life before them, with no abiding place on earth, in ceaseless conflict with persecutions

¹ John v. 18.

² John x. 29.

³ John x. 30.

⁴ John x. 38.

⁵ Mark x. 24; Luke xviii. 24; Matt. xix. 24.

and dangers, devoting all their time and strength to the work of extending and strengthening the Divine kingdom, they were not even outwardly in a position to take care of property or money. They had to look to the friends of the Gospel for the means of subsistence, or, where this resource failed, to depend upon the labour of their hands. That Jesus required of his disciples to renounce earthly wealth was by no means equivalent to asserting an incompatibility of property and wealth with the kingdom of God.

But now he had declared wealth itself a positive obstacle to entrance into the kingdom; and the question certainly arises, whether Jesus required of the members of his community voluntary poverty, or whether he considered at least a limitation of property a necessary condition of joining the cause of the Gospel. At all events it is evident from this declaration that, up to this time, almost exclusively, only persons of the poorer class had proved faithful friends and self-sacrificing followers. He does not mean to lay down a universal rule, but he cannot be silent about a melancholy fact of daily experience. It was the religion of the poor and the oppressed that he proclaimed, a community from among the people that he founded. Nevertheless it was not his opinion that the possession of wealth is in itself sinful and to be rejected. It cannot however be denied, that the rich are exposed to the great temptation of putting an unworthy trust in external goods, and that trust in riches prevents a cheerful and self-denying devotion to the kingdom of God.¹ Jesus had just again had evidence of how peculiarly hard it is for the rich to put their reliance solely upon moral good. Generally speaking, how haughty, how heartless, how indifferent to the wants of those less favoured by fortune, does wealth make those who possess it! Unquestionably the possessor even of a limited amount of property is exposed more or less to the same danger, and in the sense of this danger the disciples exclaimed, not without astonishment, 'Who under such circumstances can obtain salvation?' Jesus stilled their astonishment with the quieting word that what is impossible with man, is possible with God. The spirit of self-sacrifice which has gone forth from Jesus sanctifies even the possession of earthly wealth by teaching us to discern its

¹ Mark x. 24 gives us the declaration of Jesus in its original form; in Matt. xix. 23 and Luke xviii. 24, we have the later tradition. (See Appendix, Ill. 23.)

uncertainty, and the unsatisfactory nature of riches when they do not serve the eternal interests of life. This spirit dedicates earthly good to the supreme good, and thus causes that to be possible with God which seems impossible to man.

It is characteristic of the forward character of Peter, that he was the first to speak in order to assure his Master that he and his companions had carried out the required renunciation, and had left all to follow him. The apostles, it seems, had not been wholly without property, and it had doubtless cost them many a struggle before they resolved to turn their backs upon property and money, house and home, wife and child.¹ The answer of Jesus to this remark of Peter seems extraordinary. All that the disciples had relinquished for his sake and the Gospel's—houses, brethren, sisters, mothers, children, and lands—according to his explicit assurance, should be made good to them a hundredfold in this world.² That this assurance was very early variously understood appears from the different forms in which it is reproduced in the first and third gospels. In the first, Jesus is represented as saying that in the time of the restoration of all things he will appear in regal glory, and establish anew the empire of the twelve tribes. He promises to each of his disciples that he shall receive at that time, as a reward for his former sacrifices, the rank of prince of a tribe, a throne by the side of his own glorious throne, and for all the loss suffered a hundredfold compensation.³ A manifold compensation Jesus promises, according to the third gospel, in 'this present time,'⁴ while the promise of the restoration of the kingdom of the twelve tribes and the establishment of twelve thrones for his disciples, according to the same gospel, was not made till after the administration of the Lord's Supper.⁵ Especially remarkable is it that, according to the representation of both these gospels, the hundredfold compensation should relate to *wives* also.⁶ Jesus could not have spoken to his disciples after this manner. He who so often and so expressly asserted, from the beginning of his career, that his kingdom rested on a moral basis alone, that he would found a community upon truth, righteousness, and love, that whosoever

¹ Mark x. 28; Matt. xix. 27; Luke xviii. 28.

² Matt. xix. 28.

⁴ Luke xviii. 29.

⁶ Matt. xix. 29; Luke xviii. 29.

² Mark x. 30.

⁵ Luke xxii. 29.

laboured for the sake of reward was an unprofitable servant, and that the only reward which he offered was life eternal—he could not possibly have set before his disciples the prospect of a restoration of the Old Testament theocracy and hierarchy increased a hundredfold in possessions and enjoyments. He could not possibly have consoled his disciples with the assurance that they should receive for one house a hundred houses, for one child a hundred children, for one wife a hundred wives, as a reward for their fidelity to his Gospel.

At the time when this promise found its way into the first and third gospels, it is evident that the expectation of the second coming of Christ had already taken a gross material form in the Jewish-Christian tradition which these two gospels chiefly follow. The original meaning was already lost. Happily, it is preserved in its genuine form in the second gospel, wherein Jesus is recorded to have promised his disciples that compensation a hundredfold would be made them ‘under persecutions,’¹ for the losses suffered by persecution. It is just these additional words, wanting in the first and third gospels, that prove indisputably that the declaration of Jesus is not to be taken in a *literal sense*. ‘Persecutions’ are and will continue to be, according to this assurance, the lot which awaits his disciples *in this time*. A settled abode was not to be theirs upon earth, far less quiet and comfortable possessions. But Christian brotherly love has power to sweeten even the bitterest lot; where it reigns, brothers have all things in common.² In the day of need, one member, so far as his circumstances permit, generously places his earthly goods at the disposal of the other. He who before had but one house, to him a hundred houses open; instead of one brother, one sister, one father, one mother, there are now a hundred brothers and sisters, a hundred fathers and mothers, ready to cheer and nourish him. A hundred fields, instead of the one field lost, yield him their produce. So long as he needs support, all who in common with him confess the name of Jesus, share with him what they have. With such manifestations of Christian brotherly love, the sufferings of this time lose their sting, and even the bitterest privation becomes a source of inexhaustible blessing.

¹ Mark x. 30.

² See Acts ii. 44.

6. Such consolation did the Master give his disciples upon his last journey to Jerusalem. Probably during his protracted sojourn in Judea he had made several short visits to the capital ;¹ for the words, 'how often would I have gathered thee!' in the pronouncing of woe over Jerusalem (interwoven by the first Evangelist, according to his custom, into a longer discourse of Jesus²), refer not to repeated journeys from Galilee to Jerusalem, but to repeated labours in the city during his stay in Judea. Upon this last journey to Jerusalem, the disciples once more attempted to win Jesus over to their dreams of Messianic dominion. If there is any doubt lingering as to whether he gave them the hope of receiving a hundredfold increase of their earthly possessions, and of sitting on twelve thrones, the way in which he treated those dreams must dissipate it.

It was the sons of Zebedee, James and John, who, at that solemn and weighty moment, besought a special favour of Jesus³—nothing less than to appoint them to the first rank in the approaching distribution of the offices and dignities of the kingdom of God. It would be inconceivable how these men, belonging to the most intimate circle of the disciples of Jesus, could *still* entertain so gross an error, if we did not know from experience what power hierarchical ambition and the passion for ruling have to blind even the clearest eye. Jesus had, in fact, but just before declared anew, that he was going to meet suffering and death ;⁴ and now these two disciples desired a positive assurance of a high future reward, to sustain them in the troubles that immediately awaited them.

With wonderful patience, but also with inflexible firmness, Jesus set them right. They should drink of *his* cup, they should be baptized with *his* baptism; they should share his suffering and his death, they should be persecuted and ill treated like him, for the sake of truth and righteousness. Such was his answer. In adding that to sit on his right hand and on his left in his glory, as these disciples desired, depended not on him but on God,⁵ he declared dis-

¹ Compare Luke xiii. 34.

² Matt. xxiii. 37.

³ Mark x. 35; Matt. xx. 20.—Mark has the older and more original account. The later tradition, out of consideration for the apostles, represents the mother of the sons of Zebedee as making the request:

⁴ Mark x. 32; Matt. xx. 17; Luke xviii. 31.

⁵ Mark x. 40; Matt. xx. 23.

tinctly that his kingdom was not a worldly one.¹ Had he been the founder of an earthly throne, it would have been in his power to reward his adherents with worldly honours and distinctions. Jesus gladly seized this occasion to instruct his disciples more particularly as to the nature of his kingdom, and what was valued there as rank and honour. There is indeed in his kingdom, according to these further revelations of Jesus, the distinction of great and small, high and low. But the relation of the one to the other is essentially different from that which exists in the kingdoms of the world. Jesus states what is the distinguishing mark in this respect between worldly kingdoms and the kingdom of God founded by him. Worldly empires rely principally upon external, even military force, which fact certainly does not imply that they do not stand upon the foundations of right; but they enforce their will, when resisted, with the sword. Against such as oppose their arrangements they employ inexorable force. The kingdom of God, on the other hand, admits of no force or compulsion within its communion, it rests upon the unconditionally free accord and co-operation of its members. Hence, whoever desires to take a 'great' or high position there must renounce all claim to external power and rule. To aim at the exercise of external power and authority in the kingdom of God, is 'little,' is inconsistent with its idea and aim.

.Nothing is clearer, according to these words of Jesus, than that he never had the remotest idea of establishing a 'Church' to be supported by force. His only thought was to form a free association of men faithful to their conviction, drawn to his cause through an impulse from within, and by sincere enthusiasm and love striving with him, and with all of a like mind, to accomplish its ends. The idea of 'ruling' or of governing is nowhere to be found, according to Jesus, in the original vocabulary of the Gospel. Whoever is great shows his greatness in a way directly the reverse of 'ruling,' by readiness to serve. He is the greatest of all, or the 'first,' who serves most extensively and most effectually, and the rank of a member of the Divine kingdom is determined by the extent and importance of his *services*.

The ideal of religious and moral greatness, which had

¹ Compare Luke xvii. 20.

formed itself with steadily-increasing clearness in the mind of Jesus, he could not set before his disciples more plainly than by his own example. They were to be *his* followers, to continue *his* work. But the end of *his* life-work he now described, by saying that 'he had come not to be served, but to serve, and to give his life a ransom in the place of many.'¹ The greatest service rendered by Jesus to mankind was unquestionably his voluntary devotion of himself to death in their behalf. And his disciples, in like manner, could best serve humanity by showing themselves ready to give up their lives for upholding and spreading the Gospel among Jews and Gentiles.

This declaration of Jesus concerning the purpose of his death engages our attention for a special reason. It is the only declaration of its kind; and as it was made at the time of his last journey to Jerusalem, it is of especial interest to learn from his own lips what significance he *himself* ascribed to his death, and what was the essential fruit he expected from it.

He describes the sacrifice of his 'life' as a price, a 'ransom,' by which those for whom it was given were ransomed. In speaking of those to be ransomed as 'many,' he points expressly beyond the borders of the Jewish communion to the Gentiles, into whose midst his disciples especially were called to carry the word of the Cross. As at a former time he designated the people and the nations who needed help, 'the weary and the heavy-laden,'² so now they appear to him as 'captives.' The condition of a captive is so pitiable that it commands universal sympathy. Losing personal liberty, man mostly loses also the courage and the joy of life. In such a state, both among the Jews and Gentiles at that time, were the so-called *people*. Almost all public burdens were thrown upon the lower and middle classes. They were for the most part deprived of the blessing of civil and social liberty, and, by their dependent and oppressed condition, were in manifold ways exposed to the temptation of the grosser sins and vices. They were, in the fullest sense of the word, bound, not free. To ransom them from the bonds of this abject slavery, to bring them truth, freedom, righteousness, joy, peace, love, the comfort of expiation and forgiveness, the

¹ Mark x. 45; Matt. xx. 28.

² Matt. xi. 28.

consciousness of their human dignity, and the fresh glad sense of life and courage flowing therefrom; to invite them to participate in the enjoyment of the spiritual and moral good which alone gives to human life an enduring value and a higher consecration; to insure to them, as to the hitherto privileged higher classes, their portion in the imperishable good of man's being, was one of the main objects of the life-work of Jesus.

In order to accomplish this object, it was necessary that he should devote himself to death. Only by his death could the obstacle to the development of the true destiny of Israel, as well as of all other nations, be overcome. This obstacle was the *dead letter of the statute* which had killed, among Jews and Gentiles, the spirit of love in social and civil life. In deference to the authority of his law, which he worshipped, the Jew hated the Gentile, and excluded him from the blessings of salvation; the priest looked down with contempt upon the laity beneath him. Among the Gentiles, the free citizen refused even personal rights to the slave, and considered him as a thing without life; countries conquered in war, prisoners taken in battle, were treated with savage cruelty. Among the Jews there was no respect for the dignity of woman; this unworthy state of things was sanctioned and made sacred by the letter of the law and the statute. The wrong, flourishing in the world before Christ, and established by usage as right, must be expiated, and the letter of righteousness must be overcome by the spirit of righteousness. The *dominion of the letter must kill Jesus, in order that it might itself die with him*. He died, as, according to the letter of the law, he justly deserved, because he had taken a stand in irreconcilable opposition to it. Everything now depended upon the spirit of freedom and love which had inspired him in breaking with the statute, and upon the confidence with which he went to his death, showing itself stronger than the letter and the formula of the law. With death he paid the statute its last claim; all the power it had left was to kill the most righteous person the centuries ever saw. It had become empty, hollow, powerless. But he lived on—lived in his spirit, in his word, in his love, in his truth—within his community which testifies of him. By his death the Jewish law was judged. A stream of life and blessing flowed into the world from the blood that flowed

from him. Thus his death became the victory of freedom and love, the fountain of a new and higher righteousness for Jews and Gentiles, a ransom for the prisoners in Israel and in the Gentile world. At the same time, he hallowed pain and suffering as the most exalted manifestation of the Divine among men; he glorified self-sacrifice as the perfect revelation of heavenly righteousness and love.

In that Jesus gave his life as a ransom 'in the place of many,' lies nothing inappropriate. It was doubtless the duty of the 'captives' to help themselves, and by self-sacrifice to obtain the blessings of which they were deprived. But we know, from daily experience, how it depends continually upon the few to contend and struggle for the highest interests of life, to suffer and so to make the 'many' participate. Jesus carried in his heart the consciousness of being the champion and liberator of many, and particularly at that time, when he was about to undertake the fatal journey to Jerusalem. It had now become to him an irrevocable conviction, that he was to contend, and suffer and die, as a sacrifice for the persecuted and oppressed portion of mankind, as the friend and brother of the poor, the protector of the miserable, upon whom the leaders in Church and State were wont to look down with indifference and contempt. Thus the form of the Deliverer going towards death is surrounded with the purest light. That he knew himself, not as the representative of the great, the prosperous, and the rich; that he renounced all approval, all honour, from these classes; that he would be nothing more nor less than the helper and saviour of those who found nowhere a heart to help and a hand to save them; that his death was a death in the service of poverty and of misery, of the outcast and the perishing,—this is the Divine seal which the Father in Heaven himself impressed upon the words of Jesus, that he gave his life a ransom in the place of many; therefore is the name of Jesus a bright shining star upon the darkest pages of the history of the nations.

SIXTH SECTION.

THE CRISIS.

CHAPTER XX.

THE OLD AND THE NEW TEMPLE.

1. DURING his final sojourn in Judea, Jesus, as before mentioned, had probably visited Jerusalem several times, though the first three Evangelists do not expressly mention this, their attention being exclusively occupied with his public festive entrance into the city. The fourth Evangelist, who used but meagre sources regarding the career of Jesus in Galilee, has drawn his information almost exclusively from original documents relating to the final abode of Jesus in Judea, which he appears to have interpreted as showing that Jesus went several times, and at different periods, to the feasts at Jerusalem, and thence returned again to Galilee.

The leaders of the hierarchical party in Jerusalem had, from the beginning, doubtless followed the course of Jesus in Galilee with great attention, and soon with growing excitement. Deputies, as we have related,¹ had been sent from Jerusalem to Galilee to investigate the offence which Jesus had given, and in the course of time it had become clearer and clearer to the chief men of the High Council that between the theocratical tradition and the kingdom of God founded by Jesus a decisive conflict was inevitable.

With regard to the result, how favourable was the prospect for the ruling party! They had the power in their hands. They could at any moment institute legal proceedings against

¹ Compare p. 104.

Jesus. They seem, however, for a considerable time to have shrunk from any openly hostile act, contenting themselves for a while with endeavouring covertly to undermine his reputation, and to make him an object of suspicion among the people. They pronounced him a madman, a fool, and perverted as much as possible his most innocent expressions and his purest intentions. But partly his popularity, partly his moderation, prudence, and wisdom, protected him from a public prosecution.

When, in opposition to this last statement, the fourth Evangelist represents Jesus as the object of deadly persecution from the very beginning,¹ it is from an erroneous assumption—namely, that the extreme tension of feeling between Jesus and his opponents, which could only be the result of a series of foregone incidents and complications, existed at the very commencement of his public life. This certainly cannot be so. The hostility of the hierarchical party was a steady but a gradual growth, and the strongest incentives were required to excite their hatred to the pitch of determining upon a violent end to his career, by charging him with a capital crime.

But even in the fourth gospel there are traces of the true state of things. According to this gospel, the 'Jews' were, on the one hand, continuously busy in the attempt to execute their murderous plots against Jesus,² yet it is evident also that it was during his final abode in Jerusalem that they first formed the resolve to devote their victim to death.³ Up to the period of his last journey to Jerusalem, there existed, even according to the fourth gospel, great indecision in the Council in reference to the measures to be adopted against him. There is no trace of a concerted, well-defined plan of several years' standing to put him out of the way. The bold and sudden word of the presiding High Priest, Caiaphas, together with the weight of his opinion, decides the Council that the life of the man, growing more and more dangerous every hour, must be sacrificed for the good of all.⁴

But by what motives was the hierarchical party impelled to the momentous resolution to institute legal proceedings against Jesus? To this question the first three gospels give an answer entirely different from that of the fourth.

¹ John v. 16.

² John xi. 53.

³ John vii. 1, 19; viii. 37, 40, 59; x. 31, 39.

⁴ John xi. 47, &c.

According to the latter, it was the miraculous raising of Lazarus that greatly alarmed the High Council, and hastened the long-delayed measure.¹ That the first three gospels make no mention of the raising of Lazarus certainly does not prove it to be an invention of the fourth; yet this omission evidently shows that no such consequences as the fourth Evangelist ascribes to the miracle could have resulted from it. The first three Evangelists could not have passed it over in entire silence, if it were the special and essential cause of the legal prosecution of Jesus. But neither does the fourth gospel say that the raising of Lazarus was used, during the progress of the trial, as a ground of accusation. In the proceedings of the High Council, according to the fourth gospel, the opponents of Jesus mention the 'many signs' wrought by him,² but they are not spoken of during the further course of the proceedings as the special cause of the accusation and sentence. The remark of Caiaphas in the final sitting, that if Jesus were allowed to go on unchecked, the coming in of the Romans and the annihilation of the theocratic government were to be feared,³ points to a reason very different from that of a miraculous resurrection, which could hardly have had for its consequences the official interference of the Romans and the change of the hierarchical constitution. Besides, upon closer examination, an inner contradiction discloses itself in the narrative of the fourth gospel. When Jesus received intelligence of the hostile intentions of his opponents, he withdrew to Ephraim, a little city of Judea, in order to escape their plots against his life—the utmost caution being needed, as he was virtually declared an outlaw.⁴ Nevertheless, six days before the Feast of the Passover, he left his place of retreat without any hesitation, and betook himself to Bethany, the very spot where the miracle so eventful for him was said to have been wrought. And further, in that very Bethany, he consented to attend an entertainment given with a certain degree of show, thus drawing, almost with design apparently, public attention to himself. He also arranged to make from Bethany a public festive entry into Jerusalem amidst the acclamations of the people, thus giving into the hands of the hierarchical party the most powerful weapons against him, and exposing

¹ John xi. 46, 47.² John xi. 47.³ John xi. 48.⁴ John xi. 54–57.

himself to suspicion even in the eyes of the unprejudiced. All these difficulties disappear of themselves, when we assume with the first three Evangelists that, after a sojourn of some length in Judea and occasional visits to Jerusalem, Jesus, shortly before the Passover, made a solemn entry into the city, and that *up to this time no positive steps had been taken against him by the High Council*. It is only upon this supposition that no unfavourable light falls upon the character of Jesus. It is a manifest trait of his character that he never needlessly exposed himself to danger, and never, without the most urgent occasion, offered any new nourishment to the suspicion of which he was the object. He was particularly careful not to challenge his enemies by rash deeds to acts of violence. Had a sentence of death, even as preliminary only, been already pronounced upon him on the part of the High Council, had an order for his arrest been issued,¹ on account of the political dangers with which the constitution of the Jewish State was threatened through him, then the entertainment at Bethany and the public festive entry into Jerusalem, prepared with so much deliberation,—this bold appearance in the very citadel of the highest spiritual and temporal authorities, would be not only an historical but also a moral enigma.

The enigma is solved by the supposition that up to the day of his entrance into the city no decisive resolution had been formed by the opposing party, and no hostile measures agreed upon. Up to the last few days the Pharisees had continued to lay their snares for him at every step, without having been able to entrap him. Until now there had been no open violation of the law, and so little cause for a capital charge against Jesus, that they had to watch every word of his, in order to obtain some ground for a legal accusation. *His solemn entry into Jerusalem changed the situation of things*. This it was that first gave the hierarchical party a weapon to be used against him with effect. Only now had Jesus come before the public with apparent claims, at least, which might be construed as showing criminal designs upon the Jewish constitution and its sacred traditions.

2. That it was not by mere accident that Jesus, at the close of his labours in Judea, made a solemn and public entry into Jerusalem, all the Evangelists agree. He not only made

¹ John xi. 53-57.

particular arrangements for the occasion, which appear in the later tradition as manifestations of miraculous foreknowledge,¹ but as he approached the city he allowed his disciples to pay him extraordinary homage.² The people had received information of his coming, evidently not without his consent; for they flocked to meet him in great numbers, and received him in the most festal manner, with royal honours, strewing green branches before him, and shouting, 'Help us, blessed one that cometh in the name of the Lord; blessed be the kingdom of our father David!'³ If, as according to the fourth gospel, the joyous popular excitement were the consequence of the raising of Lazarus, the multitude would have cried, 'Here comes the awakener of the dead;' for the people streamed forth to meet him, to praise and thank him for that great deed.⁴ But this account suggests considerable doubt as to its correctness. That Jesus, with whom it was a rule to avoid all display in his wonder-workings, and to impose silence on those upon whom they were wrought—who, so far from attaching a particular importance to this power, rather lamented when signs and miracles were demanded of him as his credentials—should have consented, nay that he should himself have prepared a festal procession to glorify one of his miracles, is simply incredible. If, as is not to be doubted, he intended a solemn entry into Jerusalem, attended by the lively sympathy of the pilgrims on their way to the feast, the impelling motive thereto must have been something other than the raising of Lazarus.

The hour had now come when Jesus had *publicly* to declare himself as the Messiah, and in a meaning of the word *altogether opposed to the theocratic expectations*—as founder of a new religious-moral community resting on the foundations of truth, righteousness, freedom, equality, salvation for all, and especially for the poor and the miserable among the people. The necessity for this declaration came with the moment that he made his appearance for the first time at the seat of the theocratic power in the midst of the people, gathered to celebrate the greatest national festival of Israel. Here in Jerusalem, amidst the festal music, under the eyes

¹ Mark xi. 3; Matt. xxi. 3; Luke xix. 30; John xii. 14.

² Mark xi. 7; Matt. xxi. 7; Luke xix. 35.

³ Mark xi. 9; Matt. xxi. 9; Luke xix. 38.

⁴ John xii. 9, 17.

of the representatives of the whole nation, on the threshold of its most cherished sanctuary, surrounded by his mighty and formidable opposers, he dared not wrap himself in an ambiguous silence. Here before all, and especially before his foes, he must declare *his purpose and make known who he was*. Slowly, step by step, as we have seen, his Messianic consciousness had formed itself into full clearness, in decided contrast to the theocratic expectations. He had made himself known, first to the smaller, and then to the larger circle of his disciples—had prepared them for the inevitable consequences of his coming prominently before the public. He had placed before them, in the plainest manner, the privations, sufferings, and persecutions that awaited them.

They had, doubtless, with great eagerness spread abroad in those last days the intelligence that in him the promises of the fathers were fulfilled in an unlooked-for manner, in a sense far higher than that in which they were commonly understood. And, as is usual in such cases, the news had flown with lightning speed from mouth to mouth. That it was wholly misunderstood by the multitude was natural; they knew only of the Old Testament Messiah, the son of David; and that Jesus, as *King of Israel*, would bring them deliverance from the yoke of the priesthood and of Rome was, to them, a certainty. Under this impression they crowded to meet him upon his entry into Jerusalem, the hierarchical party making no attempt to prevent this homage, which, though it took them by surprise, was welcomed with silent satisfaction, as a further step towards the longed-for crisis. Jesus himself, too, desired that things should come to a final decision. His enemies, *hitherto concealed*, yet ever on the watch, would at last quit their concealment. The keepers and guardians of the great national sanctities must now declare openly *for* or *against* his work. On this account he did not prevent the multitude from solemnly hailing him as the Messiah coming in the name of the Lord,¹ and with whom was coming the kingdom of their father David.²

The people who met Jesus with their acclamations had doubtless very vague notions of what they might immediately hope and expect from him. But that it was not his design to possess himself of the throne of David by force,

¹ Ps. cxviii. 26.

² Mark xi. 10.

they well knew from what they had learned from his disciples, and all that they had thus far seen and heard of Jesus' work could have produced no other impression.

The entry into Jerusalem was altogether of a pacific character. Jesus rode into the city (most likely not without intentional reference to a prophecy¹) upon the foal of an ass, the symbol of patience and gentleness. His attendants carried no weapons; the branches and green leaves with which the way was strewn were emblems of the peaceful thoughts and emotions filling the breasts of those who were thus entering the city. It was an eventful hour, and the popular voice expressed, in feelings of devout presentiment and hope, that which had remained hidden from the leaders of the people—that which incited them to a deadlier hate and fiercer wrath against Jesus.

3. Jesus was resolved to make his appearance in Jerusalem as the Messiah, and as the Messiah to bear himself there. But it was not enough for this purpose that he should make a solemn entry into the city. He was now to show, by a public and decisive *act*, that he had Messianic prerogatives, and of these he was determined instantly, without regard to consequences, to make use. According to the first three Evangelists, the procession moved, without a pause of any length, to the temple, situated on the road from Jericho.² If, as the second Evangelist states, Jesus simply took a view of the temple,³ and returned immediately to Bethany, there is a mistake, we imagine, in the later working-up of the narrative, and it was also erroneously thought that the parable of the fig-tree must come in at this point as an historical fact. But Luke mentions a circumstance which happened during the triumphal entry of Jesus into the city of Zion, and which probably gave occasion to the insertion of the parable of the fig-tree in this place. According to this, Jesus, notwithstanding the remonstrances of certain Pharisees, not only made no attempt to silence the acclamations of his friends and followers, but gave expression to his deep sorrow that the city of Jerusalem itself did not openly acknowledge him.⁴ For it was, comparatively speaking, only a small portion of the population of the city that took part in the homage which was paid him, the

¹ Zech. ix. 9.

² Mark xi. 11; Matt. xxi. 12; Luke xix. 45.

³ Mark xi. 11.

⁴ Luke xix. 41.

multitude being composed chiefly of Galileans coming to the feast. Under these circumstances, Jesus foresaw the near end of the theocracy, and with it the ruin of the splendour, wealth, and all the proud hopes of Jerusalem. He dared not conceal and pass over the seriousness of the situation. It was manifest that the people, notwithstanding their overpowering majority, were not in a condition to liberate themselves from the ruling party, and that they wished for no kingdom of peace, freedom, righteousness, and truth—no religious renovation, no moral cleansing, penetrating the total life of the nation; they thirsted only for power, honour, riches, and dominion. Although what Jesus said on this occasion is no longer extant in its original shape,¹ yet it is not to be doubted that he foretold the near approach of the overthrow of Jerusalem by the Roman power, and shed bitter tears over the fate of the deluded city of God. As soon as the nation, as such, rejected the salvation which Jesus offered them, as he now clearly foresaw they would do, there was nothing left for them, in their blind proneness to excitement, but to yield themselves up without reserve to the men who were bent upon bringing about a politico-theocratic revolution. That these men would be unable to cope with the mighty power of Rome, how could this escape the keen vision of Jesus?

But Jesus did not allow these serious and sad reflections to keep him back from the main purpose of his entry into the city. He first of all turned his steps towards the temple, and thither also rolled the tumultuous billows of men. It is inconsistent with the earnestness and purity of his character to imagine that he accepted the shouts of the crowd, the palm-branches and garments spread in his way, as his Messianic consecration. By a Messianic *act*, he desired to accredit himself publicly as the founder of the true community of God, and to announce especially to the opposing party that the kingdom of God stands not in words but in power.

Notwithstanding the traditionary zeal of the ruling party, the precincts of the temple were daily desecrated in the most shameful manner—partly by money-changers, who established themselves in the court of the Gentiles for the purpose of

¹ Luke xix. 43 is unmistakably an allusion to the destruction of Jerusalem, which had then recently taken place.

furnishing, by exchange, the double drachmas required for the payment of the temple dues ; and partly by the dealers, who offered for sale the animals, frankincense, wine, oil, and whatever a zealous Israelite needed for his offerings. Upon entering the outer courts of the temple, Jesus instantly drove away from the precincts of the sanctuary, without parleying with them, these money-changers and dealers, and the people who were trading with them. His overturning the tables of the money-changers and the seats of the sellers of doves, as well as his resisting those who were carrying their profane articles to and fro across the precincts of the temple,¹ show that this was not done without violence. The fourth gospel states that, in driving out these dealers and their cattle, Jesus made use of a scourge, which he himself had made of a piece of cord.² While this scene of tumult was enacted, the people, as it appears, thronged into the outer courts of the temple, and Jesus seized the opportunity publicly to justify his doings, by appealing to passages in the Prophets.³ His manner of proceeding was unquestionably strange, and required explanation.

If it were, as the fourth gospel tells us, at the very beginning of his public career that Jesus undertook to purify the precincts of the temple in a way apparently so arbitrary and violent, this act would be inexplicable, and the whole subsequent tenor also of the evangelical history would then be enveloped in darkness. There would be no development, no progress, to be traced in the consciousness of Jesus ; and, further, it would not be plain why for such a space of time he took such pains to divert public attention from his person, and why he so long delayed the confession of his Messiahship to his disciples. That in the fourth gospel we find occurrences at the beginning of his public life which *could* have taken place only at its close, reveals the fact that the fourth gospel derived its information chiefly from sources which had their origin in Judea. And as the so-called purification of the temple was the first act of Jesus in Jerusalem which caused a sensation, the fourth gospel transfers it to the beginning of his career, as the most natural commencement of his Messianic activity.

¹ Mark xi. 16.

² John ii. 15. The account in the fourth gospel bears evident marks of a subsequent amplification.

³ Isa. lvi. 7 ; Jer. vii. 11.

But, even considered as an act performed towards the close of his public life, it still appears in many respects objectionable. Jesus had come to found a kingdom of the Eternal Spirit, and to build a temple of the Spirit, as upon this very occasion he declared.¹ Whence then this flaming zeal for the house of God built of stone? Up to this hour he had avoided every illegal step, even the faintest appearance of a violent proceeding; why then this sudden, stormy, rash procedure, before even making an attempt to complain to the officials in charge of the temple? It was not his intention, under any circumstances, to bring the community founded by him into closer relation to the temple service. He predicted with the greatest certainty that the temple would be destroyed; to what purpose then this attempt to reform the temple service? Nothing, indeed, could be more erroneous than to imagine that Jesus intended, by the purification of the outer courts of the temple, to announce himself as the reformer of the temple service. His design could only have been to express a warning against any further devotion to that service. He sought to set plainly before the multitude that accompanied him, the desecration of the sanctuary by the base lust for gain, and by traffic improper in such a place. He wished by this to make manifest to them the decay of the theocratic power, and the approaching disappearance of the temple service as a *fact already existing*. He thus aimed to prove his sacred right to have founded the spiritual temple of his community in the place of the temple of stone, degraded and desecrated as it was by its own guardians and servants. The very passages of Scripture to which he referred on this occasion for his justification authorize such an explanation of this bold deed.

In the passage quoted from Isaiah,² the reference is to the *new* temple, in which not only the Jews but other nations also will worship the Lord; and in the passage from Jeremiah,³ in contrast to external temple service, the Jews are summoned to amend their ways and their doings before the Lord. Thus, in both passages, the *possible destruction* of the old sanctuary is already presupposed.

But the *sudden and violent* act of purifying the temple finds its further explanation in the circumstances of the

¹ Matt. xxvi. 61; John ii. 19.

² Isa. lvi. 7.

³ Jer. vii. 2 *et seq.*

occasion. Upon entering the fore-court of the temple, Jesus was the more shocked at the profane din that met him there, because it originated with those who were trading in things sacred, to be offered to his Heavenly Father as sin-offerings and thank-offerings. Thus the sanctuary itself—otherwise regarded with so much external reverence, hedged round with so many time-honoured traditions—had ceased to inspire even an ordinary sense of decency! Jesus was doubtless most shocked by the shameless hypocrisy which regarded and treated holy things as means of gratifying avarice and making gain. Under such circumstances the temple was no longer the symbol of a reverent fear of God, but the venal resort of base selfishness.

Far from Jesus, then, was the thought of wishing to stand forth as a zealot for the purity and sanctity of the old temple service. He performed that bold act simply as the founder of the *new* spiritual temple of his community, for a witness against the old temple, the decay of which its own worshippers confirmed in act by their desecration of it. In denouncing this desecration, he *announced at the same time the new temple*, of which the old temple had been but the symbol.

The correctness of this view of the incident is corroborated also by what Jesus said upon the occasion, the report of which is best preserved by the second Evangelist.¹ Jesus declared that, in place of the old temple, a new temple would appear which should be *open to all nations*. By the temple opened to all nations, he could not possibly have meant the Herodian edifice; he must have intended the temple of the Messianic future, the *spiritual temple of his holy community*, to which the *Gentiles* should have entrance. As soon as the kingdom of the Eternal Spirit was founded, the sacrificial services and the institution of the priesthood must come to an end. Whither the external service of the sanctuary would lead at last, is shown most manifestly by the fact that, under the pretence of aiding Divine worship, the immediate precincts of the sanctuary had been turned into a profane market-place. Hence, when Jesus, with a bold hand, broke in upon this godless traffic, the force of the act struck, not only at the abuse which had become connected with the

¹ Mark xi. 17. Mark alone has the words, 'Is it not written, My house shall be called a house of prayer *for all nations*?'

temple service, but at the temple worship itself. The appeal of Jesus to the Jews, which the fourth gospel mentions: 'Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up,'¹—which words were afterwards proved by witnesses at the trial of Jesus,²—was really made on this occasion, and seriously meant. As soon as Jesus was publicly and solemnly proclaimed the Messiah of a *spiritual* kingdom of God, the theocratic temple service ceased to have any justification as a means of religious life. Jesus therefore went first to the temple, to announce the coming end of the temple worship. Through the act by which this announcement was accompanied, he stamped upon his word the seal of fact.

It is only thus that the reference of Jesus to the prophecy of a *future temple for all nations*³ has an appropriate significance. Only thus is it intelligible why Jesus drove *pur-chasers* away from the objects for sacrifice exposed for sale, which could not be dispensed with so long as the prescribed forms of sacrifice had validity. The saying of Jesus which belongs in this place, that he would raise up the ruined temple in three days—was preserved in that source from which the fourth Evangelist drew his narrative. But in its original meaning it found no consistent place in the Evangelist's mystical-allegorical modes of thought, and accordingly he applies it, wholly without grounds, as referring to the impending crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus. That it should have such a reference is the more unlikely, inasmuch as if Jesus, when in sight of the temple, and after driving the traffickers away, spoke of the destruction and restoration of the temple within three days, and meant thereby the death and reanimation of his own body, it would have been proposing to his hearers an inexplicable riddle. But, at such a time, there could have been no intention to speak enigmatically, for it was the hour when a distinct, final decision was to be made.

4. The incident in the temple was the immediate occasion for the measures that were now taken by the hierarchical party against Jesus. He had not only violently interfered with that authority in the temple which belonged to the high spiritual dignitaries alone, and taken upon himself the administration of the police of the temple—he had distinctly

¹ John ii. 19.

² Mark xiv. 58; Matt. xxvi. 61.

³ Isaiah lvi. 7.

declared, and before all the people, that he was the Messiah, that the sanctuary of the nation would fall through him, and that he would build *a new temple for all the nations of the earth.*

That he had set himself up against the law of the fathers, transgressed the sacred public ordinances, and put his authority above that of the High Council itself—these were charges that might now be made good against him without much difficulty. According to the former enactments of the law, he had incurred the penalty of death; and although time had weakened the operation of that law, and in many respects mitigated its application, yet the present case was of so glaring a character, that there might well be an urgent necessity for making a signal example. Thus Jesus might be prosecuted for violating the Old Covenant, for disturbing the religious opinion of the people, and attempting to set up a new unlawful religion. Whether it were advisable to prosecute him during the feast, and while he was surrounded by so many of his enthusiastic adherents—whether a popular commotion, to which the theocracy itself might fall a sacrifice, would not be produced in consequence—was certainly a question to be well considered, and, in case Jesus intended to establish a temporal kingdom of the Messiah, a matter of great probability.

Jesus did not deceive himself as to the consequences of his recent acts and declarations. He knew that his hour was at hand, and that he had come under the condemnation of the letter of an obsolete law. He knew that his opponents, if their authority was to be saved from a speedy end, were bound to use all the means in their power to put a stop to the religious, moral and spiritual revival going forth from him, and daily becoming more extensive. With all the composure and clearness of mind that characterize the hero of God standing on the summit of his great life-work, he advances towards the fuller development of his fate, which fate was soon to be decided.¹

¹ See Appendix, Ill. 24.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE OLD AND THE NEW STATE.

1. THE ruling party did not yet venture to lay hands on Jesus; they had decided to prosecute him, but wanted first to make sure of the result. That Jesus again appeared—most likely the very next day—in the precincts of the temple, is a proof of that determined inflexible courage with which in these last days he confronted the threatening dangers. A deputation of the Sanhedrim, as it appears, was commissioned officially to call him to account for violently interfering with the police of the temple. He was questioned as to his right to do things of this kind.¹ This movement would bring out whether before the officials he would lay claim to his Messianic dignity and authority, and accordingly declare himself the founder of a new religious and moral order of things.

It may seem strange that, after his solemn entry into Jerusalem, and his bold act in the temple, Jesus appears to have hesitated to designate himself as the Messiah before the officers of the law.² Not that he might remain longer unrecognized as the Messiah, but because he held it inconsistent with his dignity voluntarily to furnish his enemies with the means of prosecuting him, this is why he returned an evasive answer. Besides, was he not justified in asking them a question before replying to theirs, and did not their refusal to answer justify his? He considered it right, moreover, to let the deputies of the hierarchical party know that he saw clearly through their plans and intentions; and this he showed them in two parables, both of which are given by the first Evangelist, while only one of them is found in the second and third gospels. By the first, the parable of the

¹ Mark xi. 27; Matt. xxi. 23; Luke xx. 1.

² Mark xi. 29; Matt. xxi. 24; Luke xx. 3.

two sons, he set before his questioners the hypocrisy and false-heartedness which they had displayed towards John the Baptist, and were now, in a higher degree, showing towards him. While the 'publicans and harlots,' the classes most degraded morally, had at least listened to the instruction of John and to his reproof concerning their evil ways, they, the representatives of the traditional wisdom, the bearers of public authority, had only hardened themselves still more against the preaching of that teacher of righteousness; and, if they had not taken part against John, but even spoken well of him, it was not from any real feeling of respect for that earnest teacher of morals, but only because they feared the loss of their popularity.¹ Jesus therefore now told them, in plain words, that the kingdom would be taken from them and given to the 'sinners.' They were like the son who promised to work and did nothing.² Still more pointedly did Jesus describe the character of his opponents in the parable of the unfaithful husbandmen.

In this parable the Jewish people are compared, as repeatedly in the Old Testament, to a vineyard. In the times of the Old Covenant the Lord had sent the prophets as *his* labourers into the vineyard. A fine allusion this of Jesus to the fact that priests and kings, generally speaking, had not fulfilled their duty to God, but, on the contrary, that his labourers, the prophets, had fallen a sacrifice to the ill-treatment received at their hands. In this parable Jesus designates himself most distinctly as the 'heir,' the Messiah, in decided contrast to the Old Testament prophets, the servants, the labourers. He tells his opponents to their faces that he knows their designs upon his life, and admits that they will succeed in executing them. How significant that he looks upon himself as the 'heir,' the inheritor of the spiritual estate of the Old Covenant!³ The heir is not bound to allow the inherited estate to be used as before, least of all when this use is proved to have been misuse. He intends to transform the letter of the Old Testament law into spirit, to change statutes into life. But for this he must die, for the hierarchy tolerates no transfiguring of the law, no victory of the spirit over the letter, of freedom over spiritual bondage. In order to prevent Jesus from carrying out his purpose, the men of tradition were

¹ Mark xi. 32; Matt. xxi. 26; Luke xx. 6.

² Matt. xxi. 30.

³ Mark xii. 7.

resolved to be his murderers. They resorted to this extreme measure, not from a cruel pleasure in blood, not even from any personal feeling of revenge, but from hierarchical fanaticism. They saw threatened by Jesus the institutions which secured to them honour, power, and distinction, and from their narrow point of view they held that the welfare of the Jewish nation was identified with the undisputed continuance of those institutions.

No thought of the possibility, or even desirability, of an outward victory over his foes arose within Jesus. The purest self-forgetting submission to the fearful fate awaiting him speaks in every word that falls from his lips. The present belonged to his enemies, the *future to him*. He carried within, the conviction which nothing could disturb, that the day of the religion of the law was past, that Jerusalem was about to lose its high position as the centre of revealed religion among the nations. The declaration that the vineyard would be given to 'others,'¹ contains the prophetic truth that the descendants of Japheth were thenceforth to lead all progress, religious, moral, social, and civil. These, as the bearers of a living faith in God and of a purified morality, were now to be accounted, in the eyes of God, the true Israel.²

2. The effect which these denunciations produced upon the powerful opponents of Jesus, bent upon bringing him to trial, may easily be imagined. As by the incident in the temple, he had protested against the theocratic form of worship, so by these declarations he lifted up his voice against the theocratic institution—in fact, against the whole theocratic nation, so far as it had not shown itself determined to separate its fate from that of its leaders. This assault struck to the heart, inflicting a deadly wound upon those at whom it was aimed. The 'high priests and scribes,' the men of the reigning theological schools, and the heads of the ecclesiastical power, were painted, in colours not to be mistaken, as enemies of God, of his ambassadors, even of his own son. They were represented as murderers of that new life which God sought to communicate to his people. The conflict between Jesus and the hierarchical party was thus pronounced by Jesus himself a *conflict for life or death*.

Under these circumstances, there remained nothing for

¹ Mark xii. 9; Luke xx. 16; Matt. xxi. 41, with a later addition.

² Ps. cxviii. 22.

the hierarchy but to hasten as quickly as possible the arrest of Jesus. After such deadly attacks, it must have appeared extremely perilous to suffer this man to go at liberty any longer, and to allow him free speech. From its own point of view the ruling party was not in the wrong, and, according to the civil usages of modern times, such bold proceedings as those of Jesus during his sojourn in Jerusalem against public and acknowledged authority, would certainly not have been tolerated so long. It was only the weight of public opinion that held back the authorities from arresting Jesus immediately. They feared the 'multitude,' the 'people.'¹

This fear may seem surprising, as the Pharisaic party, on account of their strivings for nationality, had else the voice of the people in their favour. But the recent imposing appearance of Jesus in Jerusalem; his bold declaration that he was, in a wholly new sense of the word, the Messiah; his equally bold action against the disorder in the temple; his large and free views of a new spiritual sanctuary, open to all nations; the holy courage, the God-inspired intrepidity, which he manifested in all that he said and did; his disinterestedness, that willingness to suffer and to sacrifice himself, which his bitterest enemies scarcely ventured to question—in a word, *his unique and incomparable personality*—had already won for him, if not the larger, yet the better part of the population of Jerusalem. Numerous adherents of his had arrived from Galilee, Perea and Judea, many ardent friends and sympathizers in his work surrounded him, the eyes of not a few were opened to the delusion into which the hierarchical party had lulled themselves and others, and an arrest of Jesus in the excitement of the festal week might be attended with many difficulties. New attempts therefore must be made to get up reliable points of accusation against Jesus, and to justify, to some extent at least, in the eyes of those who were well-disposed towards him, the seizure of his person.

3. According to the second Evangelist, such an attempt first proceeded from the highest ecclesiastical authority.² After the entrance of Jesus into Jerusalem, it was no longer mere party intrigues, but official steps, that were taken

¹ Mark xii. 12; Luke xx. 19; Matt. xxi. 46.

² Mark xii. 13; xi. 27.

against him, by which his ruin was to be effected as speedily as possible. The High Council felt themselves moved, on account of the popularity of Jesus, to strengthen themselves by calling to their side adherents of the Pharisaic school and members of the Herodian party, in order by their help to obtain the strongest proofs possible against him. They had sufficient evidence to support a *religious prosecution*, but it was very doubtful whether the charge of creating a 'religious disturbance' would have any weight with the civil magistrate, by whom a sentence of death must be ratified. Hence arose the necessity of bringing the *political* character of Jesus under suspicion, and of branding him, if possible, as an enemy to the Roman rule. This latter task was undertaken by a deputation of Pharisees and Herodians.¹ With flattering expressions about his fearless love of truth, they approached him, and, in order to put him off his guard, they bore honourable testimony to his disregard of the distinctions of rank, and to his teaching in truth 'the way of God'—i.e., the way well-pleasing to God.

By paying him such homage, they hoped to draw from him his most secret thoughts as to his position towards the civil power, and his designs in reference to the Roman authority. There was a question that might be honestly answered in very different ways,—the question concerning the duty of *paying the taxes imposed by the Roman Government*, when regarded from the point of view of the theocratic institution. The Roman power was certainly a usurpation; the true Jew recognized no lord over him but the Lord of Heaven and Earth. And as Jesus had distinctly declared it to be his great life-work to establish a kingdom of Heaven, must it not have appeared a logical consequence that his followers were released from the obligation of paying taxes to an earthly kingdom? The deputation, therefore, with well-meditated cunning, put the question to him, whether the Roman Emperor had a right to levy taxes on the Jews, and whether the Jews were bound to pay the tribute imposed? They had reckoned with confidence upon his declaring, from his point of view, that such a tribute *ought not* to be paid. This calculation showed that they had a very imperfect idea of the work and aim of Jesus. They would hardly have put this

¹ Mark xii. 13; Matt. xxii. 15; Luke xx. 20.

cunning question to him, had they not really suspected him of secret designs against the Roman supremacy. It was doubtless their belief that he intended to strike a blow at the governing powers in Judea, and make himself, under the title of Messiah, the spiritual and temporal head of the Israelitish people.

The less intimation he had given, either in word or deed, of such a purpose, the more they wanted to hear about it and get particulars, and so to prevent the meditated blow against the existing order. If Jesus could be proved in religious matters an audacious and incorrigible transgressor of the statutes of the fathers, and in political matters a daring and violent conspirator against the civil order, then death alone could expiate such wickedness, and his condemnation by the Roman Procurator might be confidently anticipated.

But these crafty plotters found themselves baffled in their expectation. The answer that Jesus returned to their question bears witness, not only to his admirable presence of mind and sober reflection, and, we may add, to his lofty mood in one of the most difficult moments of his life, but it likewise contains, in the simplest terms, the principle perfectly suited to adjust the relations of religion and the State for all times. Religion and the State, as he declares, have each *its peculiar sphere*, which must not be confounded the one with the other; and he utters an emphatic warning against everything of that kind, by bidding his questioners 'Render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and to God the things that are God's.'¹ A charge to which the Jewish hierarchy was open, was that they had confused together two spheres that ought to be treated as essentially distinct. Their kings had seized and appropriated to themselves priestly prerogatives, their priests had striven for royal dignity and power. The kingdom of God, founded by Jesus, had especially the destiny of putting an end to this mingling of Church and State. The intention of Jesus undoubtedly was, to secure for his kingdom, 'the community' of believers, a position wholly independent of State officials and State patronage. Nothing was farther from him than the idea of establishing a religious association to be ruled or guided by the State, a so-called 'State Church.' He did not, indeed, regard the State as an institution to

¹ Mark xii. 17; Matt. xxii. 21; Luke xx. 25.

which religion was indifferent; he had the greatest respect for its rights and its dignity. But the State is to the kingdom of God, as the particular to the universal. In his kingdom, Jesus comprehended whatever in human life tended to a higher order of things, an order established under the authority of God himself and of his Spirit. In this communion the State would find its place only as a member and instrument of the great whole. But the State, as such, was not by any means an immediate object of Jesus' activity; in the religious and moral sphere, the sphere of the conscience, which is *essentially free and universal*, his work exclusively lay. The sphere of the State, on the other hand, is and must be confined within the limits of outward law and of nature, legal compulsion and national boundaries. The question about the tribute, which afforded an opportunity to Jesus to declare what the relation is between religion and the State, was particularly suited to place the fundamental difference between the two in a clear light.

The State cannot treat the payment of taxes as a voluntary matter, depending upon the pleasure of individuals; in case of refusal to pay them, it must resort to force. But compulsion is entirely excluded from the conditions of life in the kingdom of God. Here only voluntary performance has worth and weight, and whatever is done for the Divine cause unwillingly, without truth and love, is, before God, as though it were not done; if done hypocritically, it is an abomination in his sight. Render to Cæsar what is Cæsar's, and to God what is God's, says Jesus. In other words, the question of the tax has, in itself, nothing to do with the kingdom of God; it is an affair of the State, and the lawfulness of a tax is not to be disputed upon *religious*, but only upon *legal and political* grounds.

That the deputies of the High Council were filled with disagreeable surprise at the reply of Jesus we can imagine. They had failed in their purpose; for the declaration of Jesus was not only a direct one—it contained also an indirect summons to the hierarchy to fulfill their duties to the State, *i.e.* to the Roman Government, conscientiously. The vital sense of the words of Jesus the deputation did not understand, for a religious association without the power to use force and inflict punishment must have seemed to them, from their point of view, a nonentity. The Old Testament

order of things was in itself, in a certain sense, a State institution. Obedience to its laws was exacted by force, and disobedience punished severely. Jesus himself was to answer with his life for his departure from the customary and the traditional. The idea of freedom of conscience and faith, which was the starting-point of the whole working and striving of Jesus, was a 'stone of stumbling' and a 'rock of offence' to the Jewish hierarchy. A religion that allowed every one to believe according to his spiritual needs, was not possible in their eyes. The deputation retired dissatisfied with themselves, because they had not gained their purpose, but strengthened more than ever in the belief that Jesus was a dangerous innovator, an enemy to the statutes and ordinances received from the fathers, an element of disturbance and agitation, to whose influence a check must be put as speedily as possible.

4. And now all the influential Jewish parties were united against Jesus. He had in the higher classes only opponents, his friends were among the *people*. His behaviour in the temple, and his explicit claim to be the Messiah, rendered him the object of general mistrust, and of a persecution to which all the powerful ones consented. Even members of the Sadducean school crowded around him, to play off upon him their insipid derision, for his Messianic labours were to them, probably, more matters of ridicule than alarm. The Sadducees, who rejected the belief of the letter and the zeal for tradition which distinguished the Pharisees, ought to have recognized and appreciated in Jesus a kindred freer spirit. But cold, haughty, indifferent to the eternal springs of religion, they disliked his ardour and his love to humanity; and the more boldly and unhesitatingly he went forward, the more they derided his enthusiasm as fanaticism. The teaching of Jesus about the resurrection, they ridiculed in its relation to the Mosaic Law,¹ by which, when the husband died leaving no children, his brother was bound to marry the widow. But Jesus silenced them by giving them to understand that he did not share in the material ideas of the resurrection entertained by the Pharisees. In reply to the foolish and frivolous inference of the Sadducees, that, if seven brothers should one after another marry one woman without issue, it

¹ Deut. xxv. 5.

would be doubtful whose wife she should be in Heaven, Jesus shows on his part a *highly spiritual* conception of our continued personal existence in a higher state of being after death. All that is material of the life of a person has then ceased, and man then has a form of being appropriate to his spiritual destiny. The germ of the doctrine set forth by Jesus concerning the resurrection lies in the idea that the person created by God carries in himself a source of imperishable life, because he is made after the likeness of God. Consequently, according to the testimony of Jesus, belief in immortality rests on faith in man's original and indissoluble oneness of life with God. It belongs to the character of the ever-living God, that he is not a God of the dead, but of the ever 'living' ones.¹

The prosecution of Jesus was, as we know, already determined upon by the hierarchical party, but the last attempts to entangle him in the snares that were set for him were frustrated; the endeavour especially to find grounds for accusing him of cherishing designs dangerous to the State had proved unsuccessful. The hierarchical party could not but suppose that he had such designs. They could not conceive of the work of the Messiah otherwise than in connection with revolutionary attempts and an insurrection of the Jewish people against the Government of Rome. The pacific character, therefore, in which Jesus appeared, they could consider only the hypocritical mask of a demagogue. They deceived themselves, blindly judging him by their own standard. Jesus died with the pure consciousness of having laboured only for the eternal kingdom of the Spirit, but they perished in the struggle for worldly power. Jesus claimed neither rule, nor influence in matters of State; he only claimed for his community free space, free air, unhindered power of moving, a position independent of the State. He never expected nor desired, from the representatives of the State, either a direct or indirect support for his cause. He entered into no alliance with the Roman Procurator, made no effort to win Herod Antipas to his purposes. By taking this position, independent of all public authority, he advanced immeasurably beyond the theocratic stand-point; and while he *separated religion from politics, and laboured for the former*

¹ Mark xii. 18; Matt. xxii. 23; Luke xx. 27.

without the co-operation of the latter, he has established freedom of conscience, and made religious conviction independent of the civil power for all times. From the stand-point of the theocracy, religion is the efflux of the kingdom, invested by God with supernatural powers. Such was the idea of the opposers of Jesus. From his stand-point, religion is the efflux of the conscience, self-dependent, bound only to the immediate source of all truth and love—to God himself and his revealings. No charge was more plausible than that Jesus cherished political designs, none in reality was more unjust. But there has certainly proceeded from him an entirely new relation of State enactments to religious convictions, of State fellowship to Church fellowship.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE PRONOUNCING OF WOE UPON THE HIERARCHICAL PARTY.

1. THERE was still one point upon which the opponents of Jesus might hope to find a sure ground of complaint, and one that might be turned to account as a political accusation. At an earlier period he had called himself the 'son of man,' but he had since laid claim to the dignity of 'son of God.' Let decisive evidence of the fact be adduced, and it would not be difficult to show that he had violated the *first* commandment of the Decalogue, that he had assumed without qualification Divine honours, that he was thus guilty of blaspheming the Divine name, and had moreover expressed the desire to take possession, like a new David, of the *Messianic* throne. A Jewish theologian, as it appears, was sent to ascertain from him his relation to the first commandment.¹ If, in answer to the question, which was the first commandment, Jesus should allow it to appear that he claimed Divine authority for himself—*i. e.*, should he declare himself against the incomparable exaltedness of God over all creatures—then it would no longer be difficult to hand him over to the law as a blasphemer of the Supreme Majesty of Heaven, and also to charge him, as a necessary consequence of such arrogance, with a design to secure earthly power and supremacy as well. But Jesus, in his reply, made not the slightest allusion that could offend the ear of the strictest zealot of the Old Testament doctrine concerning God. He guarded himself against distinguishing *one* commandment above the rest, considering the fact that the law of the Ten Commandments forms an inseparable whole, and therefore there could be no discussion as to the greater or less worth of its particular precepts. For this conception he appealed

¹ Mark xii. 28; Matt. xxii. 34.

to several passages of the law itself;¹ and while he placed the law of love to one's neighbour by the side of the law commanding love to God, he pronounced the former to be as important as the latter, and both taken together he declared to be the most important.² He showed that there was not a shadow of cause for accusing him of weakening faith in the oneness and uniqueness of God, and by emphasizing this in a very pointed manner, he repelled most forcibly the calumny that he claimed Divine honour for himself.³ This explicit declaration confounded his questioner, the scribe, who, evidently taken by surprise, exclaimed, 'Well, Master, thou hast said the truth' (therefore not, as I expected it), '*for there is one God and there is none other but he.*' The charge circulated against Jesus, that he attacked the honour that belonged only to God, claiming Divine dignity for himself, and destroying the Divine unity, was thus shown to be calumnious. Instead of at all derogating from the doctrine of the unity and uniqueness of God, he had rather affirmed anew its importance for the religious and moral consciousness. The scribe showed himself no incorrigible partisan, he was open to better thoughts. The snare laid for Jesus had failed again, and the man had to return to his employers to report its failure. He was far from being disappointed, but rather rejoiced at having found Jesus different from what he expected; and therefore Jesus could testify to the scribe that he was not far removed from his cause—not far from the kingdom of God.⁴

2. This conversation throws a significant light upon the character of Jesus, as it plainly shows that, notwithstanding his Messianic calling and his dignity as 'son of God,' he did not claim to be a Divine being, or to have Divine attributes. He considered his Messianic office and authority as entirely consistent with a human personality and activity; but in such a sense the hierarchical party were utterly unable to acknowledge him as Messiah. The founder of a *communion of the spirit and of faith* was the most dangerous opponent of the theocratic institution. Hence that party had double reason for rendering Jesus harmless as quickly as possible. The bare fact that the founder of such a com-

¹ Deut. vi. 4; Levit. xix. 18.

² Mark xii. 31; Matt. xxii. 39.

³ Mark xii. 29, which gives the original declaration of Jesus, entirely in the spirit of the Old Testament monotheism.

⁴ Mark xiii. 34.

munion had solemnly declared himself the Messiah, had not without reason caused the greatest uneasiness and excitement among all the adherents of custom and tradition, and fully strengthened them in the determination to prosecute Jesus. From their point of view, they could not regard him as *the Messiah*; to them he must appear as one deluding himself and others. He was a *deceiver*. A cry was now found to inflame the people, and no effort must be spared to show by facts the utter invalidity of the Messianic pretensions of Jesus.

According to the letter of the tradition, the Messiah was to be a direct descendant of David himself. How now, if it were demonstrable that Jesus stood in not the remotest relation to the royal house?

In truth, Jesus the Nazarene, the carpenter's son, had never been thought of as a branch of the house of David. Although, upon his entry into Jerusalem, he was hailed as the 'son of David,'¹ yet this title had reference, not to his natural descent, but to his Messianic kingship, which was already understood among his disciples in its spiritual and moral sense. The genealogies,² that were made up several decades after Jesus' death, to give to the Jews an external testimony of his Messianic dignity, contain the most striking proof of the difficulty of authenticating his descent from David.

As *this most essential sign of the Messiah*, the descent from the royal house, was wanting in him, the hierarchical party industriously spread everywhere that he had *deceitfully* announced himself as the Messiah. Had Jesus himself believed in his royal descent, he would now have had the most urgent occasion to make good this claim, and prove it by all the means and evidences in his power. *He did not do so.* On the contrary, he showed that the hope of a Messiah descending from David was visionary.

This truth he set forth from Ps. cx. In this Psalm, of which David was erroneously supposed at that time to be the author, God commands the theocratic king, the 'Lord' of the Psalmist, to sit on his right hand. Starting from the

¹ This form of salutation is not found in Mark and Luke, but only in Matt. (xxi. 9). It is wanting also in the fourth gospel. See Mark xi. 9; Luke xix. 37; John xii. 13.

² Matt. i. 1; Luke iii. 23.

supposition that by that king was to be understood the Messiah, David would have designated the Messiah as *his* Lord. But if David considered the Messiah as *his* Lord, it is manifest that he could not have expected him to arise among his sons or posterity. That the father should call his 'son' his Lord, is altogether repugnant to the consideration paid in the Old Testament to the feeling of reverence. The father, David, continued always to be greater and more glorious than any son of his. Hence Jesus rejected the popular opinion that the Messiah must be a descendant of David.

In fact, Jesus could not more directly and powerfully oppose the carnal hopes of the Messiah, with which the hierarchical party were filled, than by combating as he did the idea that the Messiah, in the *new* sense in which he claimed this dignity, must descend from David. It is a great error, therefore, to suppose, as is often done, that Jesus appealed to this Psalm to prove his descent from David, and thus to establish his Messiahship. *He did no such thing then or ever.*¹

It was the belief of his community in his Messianic calling that begot the belief in his descent from David. The Jews, even the most pious of that day, could not conceive of the Messiah otherwise than as decorated with the badge of that high lineage. But Jesus combated this notion, and sought, although without success, to liberate his followers from this superstition in regard to his Davidic origin. As the founder of the kingdom of God, as the God-commissioned king of truth, of righteousness, of love and peace, he felt, in relation to a crowned prince like David, *as a Lord* incomparably higher and more glorious. How could he have needed evidence from the genealogical tree of David to accredit him as the Messiah, when he was David's Lord by the innate royalty and moral greatness of his character, shown by innumerable open acts?

3. From the height of his consciousness as the Messiah, Jesus had publicly and distinctly called himself the 'son of God.' There is nothing in the first three gospels to authorize the idea that he assumed this title in any sense essentially different from that in which the people Israel,

¹ Compare Mark xii. 35; Matt. xxii. 41; Luke xx. 41; and Appendix, Ill. 25.

or the theocratic king, had been called 'son of God.' The fourth gospel also furnishes unmistakable evidence that Jesus, in the last days of his sojourn in Jerusalem, did not connect with his dignity as 'son of God,' the idea of being a superhuman, Divine person. In those stirring days, in the increasing public excitement, the 'Jews' demanded of him a direct declaration whether or not he were the Messiah.¹ The fourth gospel agrees with the first three in giving us to understand that the earlier declarations of Jesus in regard to his Messiahship, were not sufficiently plain and satisfactory at least to those who stood at a distance from him. In reply to the demand that he would declare himself, he appealed to the works which he had done in the name of his Heavenly Father, as the only sufficient testimony of his Messiahship. The excitement against him appears at that time to have risen to the highest pitch, because he spoke of himself as 'One with the Father,'² although, to prevent all possible misunderstanding, he had previously said that the Father was greater than all,³ and, at another time, that the Father was greater than he.⁴ It had before been objected to him, that although a man he made himself God, and was therefore guilty of blasphemy, and this objection was repeated. The way in which, according to the fourth gospel, Jesus defended himself against the charge of blasphemy is very remarkable. He made no allusion to an essential equality and unity with God, but refers to a passage in the Psalms,⁵ in which—according to his understanding of it—mortal men, unjust judges probably, are addressed as 'gods;' and he thence infers that if this lofty title is given in the Holy Scriptures to unjust judges, surely with far better right may he call himself the 'son of God.' Such passages in the fourth gospel show a genuinely historical remembrance of Jesus' own sayings about his Messianic dignity. It was not in a philosophic theory about his superhuman nature, but in an inner personal experience of his spiritual and moral uniqueness and holiness, that the consciousness of his Messiahship and also of his *Divine sonship* had its living root. There was dwelling

¹ John x. 22.—The fourth gospel certainly misplaces this scene in referring it to the Feast of Dedication. As Jesus could have been in Jerusalem, during the time of a feast, only at the last Passover, the event related must fall in the time of the final abode of Jesus in the capital.

² John x. 30.

³ John x. 29.

⁴ John xiv. 28.

⁵ Ps. lxxxii. 6.

in him the daily experienced certainty of being in *personal possession* of a life far higher and more abounding in the life of God, than all the religious institutions of his country and his time could offer to the longing imagination of man. An inexhaustible fountain, quickening, refreshing, consoling and purifying, was springing within him from Divine depths. He had gained a certainty, which could not be shaken, of the oneness of his spirit with God. If Israel, according to the testimony of the Holy Scriptures, was the 'son of God;' if the better theocratic kings were so styled, was he not in unapproachable perfection the rightful representative of his nation, the brightness of the extinct kingship? Did he not deserve the name 'son of God' in the most comprehensive sense of the word? Could he have any doubt that the religious and moral regeneration of his country depended upon him? Already he felt himself to be the head of the New Israel, the deliverer, the redeemer of all nations, the *Saviour of the World*, the resurrection and the life of mankind.¹

The appeal to the genealogical tree of David was an appeal to external and human testimony, regarding which Jesus had declared that he received not testimony from men;²—but he referred them to his life-work, to the testimony of God living and working in him. Thus then, upon close examination, the fourth gospel knows nothing of a dignity in Jesus equal with God's; nothing of a nature in his person, according to which he had been the eternal creative source, the absolute cause of his acts and achievements. It was from his Father in Heaven that all power flowed into him; of himself, the son could do nothing. Not because an inner necessity compels the Father, but because he is connected by a relationship of free love with the son, he *shows* him the works which he shall accomplish. The son thus appears beyond all question, in his relation to the Father, as a willing pupil.³ And although the Father has delivered all judgment to the son, it is still only a charge which the son has received from the Father, and not an indwelling dignity or power peculiar to himself. Man is, indeed, to honour the son, not as the original possessor of Divine attributes, but as an ambassador of God; and ambassadors of God, executors of

¹ John xi. 25.² John v. 34.³ John v. 19.

the Divine will, were the prophets also. It belongs, above all things, to the nature of God that his will is primal, unconditioned, governing the whole creation, its spirits and its laws. Had the fourth gospel intended to represent Jesus as of equal being with God, it must have ascribed to him a will, underived, causative, and unconditioned. So far from this being the case, Jesus in this gospel expressly declares, that he renounces a peculiar will of his own, and that his sole aim is to do the will of God his Father.¹ Therefore, he says also, that he came not in his own name, he seeks only to be a faithful instrument of his Heavenly Father.² He relies also upon the Father's aid, and rejoices in the consciousness that the Father is with him, and has not left him *alone*. But this consciousness does not come to him from supposing an indissoluble unity of being with the Father, but springs from the sure conviction that he is ever doing what pleases the Father.³

4. At an earlier period, Jesus simply defended himself against the assaults of the hierarchical party. But the knowledge which he had at a later period of their deadly designs released him from all reserve. The defensive position which he had maintained until now, he changed to an attitude of open attack; but no ebullition of passion, no momentary excitement moved him thereto. With the calmest conviction, with entire self-possession, he rose against his foes. He desired now that the crisis might speedily develope itself. After being once convinced that it could not be averted, that his death was the necessary condition of the victory of his cause, he could desire nothing else. By a *public* attack upon the leaders of the hierarchical party, the opposition in which he stood to them would become manifest to all; every man must then decide to take one side or the other. The party itself could no longer stay the execution of its resolves; an end must come. The first three gospels have handed down to us the discourse in which Jesus advanced to a public attack upon the opposing party. Only two of them have fitly interwoven it into the history of coincident events. But, while the second Evangelist, conformably to his custom of avoiding discourses of any length, gives us only a brief abstract,⁴ the

¹ John v. 30.

² John v. 43.

³ John viii. 29.

⁴ Mark xii. 38.

first Evangelist, on the other hand, has a discourse of great length, and elaborated with so much art that it may safely be assumed, it could not have been delivered by Jesus in this extended shape upon an occasion evidently of short duration.¹ The third Evangelist has preserved the keen points of the discourse more fully than the second, but in an erroneous connection.² We gather from the reports of the three Evangelists, substantially agreeing as they do, that the opposition of Jesus to the theocratic party, which now, at the close of his career, came out so pointedly, was not essentially of a theological, but of a *religious* and *moral* nature.

According to the second gospel, Jesus charged the Pharisees, the most exclusive and the most intelligent party among the representatives of the hierarchy, with two fundamental faults : first, *hypocrisy*, in that they made religion a trade, and wrapt themselves up in the deceptive show of a special piety ; and second, *self-seeking*, disclosed in an excessive fondness for distinction, in wearing long flowing robes, in the claim they made to be treated with demonstrations of personal reverence, and to be awarded seats of honour, and in an unfaithful administration of the trusts committed to their charge. The first Evangelist tells us that Jesus commended their teaching ; all that they taught was to be observed, but their practice was not to be imitated ; it was known that they did not follow their own precepts.³

But Jesus surely could not have expressed himself in this way ; he would thus have given his countenance, although only indirectly, to the Pharisaic system of statutes and formulas.⁴ That the Pharisees did not follow their own teachings he doubtless said, and hence it was inferred by the Evangelist that Jesus esteemed those teachings commendable.

The special charge which Jesus made against the Pharisees, as is evident also from the third gospel,⁵ was their *hypocritical* spirit, a disposition of mind closely connected with the literal and formal observances which they revered. For themselves, they seemed to have taken it pretty easily with their statutes. Many of the austere practices which they im-

¹ Matt. xxiii. 1-39.

⁴ See Appendix, III. 26.

² Luke xi. 37-52.

³ Matt. xxiii. 3.

⁵ Luke xi. 39.

posed on others as indispensable duties, they did not themselves touch with so much as a finger. By pronouncing these Pharisaic means of virtue burdensome and scarcely to be borne, Jesus condemned the Pharisaic morality as an oppressive yoke to the conscience.¹ In the interest of their party, the Pharisees put the people who were led by them into the fetters of the straitest discipline, thus weakening the nerve of all genuine virtue, freedom, and love. For themselves they *studied to appear pious*. They would be *seen* in their devout exercises, and so they made the phylacteries worn on the forehead and arm, while saying prayers, very broad, and the tassels which were attached to the hem of the upper garment, in honour of the statutes, very long, thus to *show* their zeal for the law of the Lord. On these accounts Jesus must have condemned, not only their practice, but their *principles* also, and it is the less probable, therefore, that he could really have commended their doctrine and teaching.

That their zeal for religion was hypocritical was shown by the absence of all principle, and the want of reverence for the spirit of the moral law manifested by their *acts*. Long prayers, and—the spoiling of houses of widows committed to their guardianship! Flaming zeal to make one proselyte, regardless of expense, and—afterwards utter moral neglect of their convert! Rigorous stickling for every syllable in form, and—boundless levity as to the spirit! High-sounding words in regard to the sanctity of an oath, and—such cunning reservations in swearing as the adroitest school of Jesuitism could not excel!² Fidelity in trifling and indifferent things, and—gross neglect in observing the most important moral principles, the most sacred dictates of right, and especially the calls of justice and mercy! How well does Jesus liken the Pharisees to those fastidious persons who strain their wine before they drink it, lest there should be a fly in it, and yet afterwards swallow down whole camels! With what incomparable natural colours is that hypocritical zeal here portrayed, that busies itself with the *mask* of godliness, but cares not for the *reality*! Whoever is so conscientious in little things, how careful must he be in great! So judges the

¹ Matt. xxiii. 4.

² Matt. xxiii. 16.—They made a distinction between oaths by the temple and by the gold of the temple, between oaths by the altar and by the gift on the altar, between oaths by heaven and by the throne of God,

ordinary popular understanding, and upon this superficial judgment the whole artificial system of Pharisaic morality relied. It was a system of petty orthodoxy,—of idolatrous devotion to the letter, and utter contempt for the spirit of all that is moral and sacred.

5. The irreconcilable difference between this system and the character and life-work of Jesus had once more to be exhibited in its full extent; it must be proclaimed to the *people* assembled at the Feast. The momentous question was now to be sent home to every individual, what he would decide for, what he would choose. How infinitely great and pure does Jesus appear in the principles of his Divine kingdom, in his truth, his righteousness, love and humility, his profound moral earnestness, his cheerful spirit of self-sacrifice, contrasted with those miserable sophistries and impositions! A spirit of punctilious care for trifles was excluded from the sphere of Jesus; there was no trace here of cunning calculation, of canting piety, which snatches after easy and brilliant results. Here religious feeling was in intimate alliance with moral effort. There among the Pharisees, on the other hand, external piety, without moral earnestness, official zeal for the performing of duties not dictated by conscience,—the whole doctrinal system a structure erected by art for the purpose of lording it over consciences and of ruling souls. The preservation of religious usages and traditions, the confirmation and extension of the influence of the spiritual authorities over the laity, were the ends chiefly kept in view. As to an awakening of a vigorous, religious, and moral spirit, and as to a renewing of the decaying state of things from the central life, the conscience, there was no thought, because in such a work the co-operation of free conviction was indispensable. Pharisaism was a system of outward purity and inward corruption. Hence, in describing it, Jesus used, with striking effect, the image of cups and platters, clean on the outside, but filthy within, where the food is put.¹ Notwithstanding external restraint and moderation—inwardly, boundless thirst for getting and gaining. In spite of all pedantic legality—inwardly, a passion for glory and power breaking through all restraints. The Pharisees would be in everything the chief—in the chair of

¹ Matt. xxiii. 25.

instruction, in the synagogue, in the seat of honour at the social feast.¹ In the streets they expected to be first saluted; by their pupils to be honoured with the title 'Master' (Rabbi.) Utter emptiness within was covered over with the cloak of assumption, superficial knowledge went hand-in-hand with arrogant conceit as to the value of their own wisdom.

With such a system Jesus could make no terms; it must be broken with wholly and for ever. There could only be pronounced upon it *a woe*, the cry of doom to the hierarchy, to the Jewish theologians and priests, and to the party by which these were favoured and defended.

The theology and hierarchy of the Jews were *morally* undermined. And, because they were wanting in power and the means of a *moral* renewing, Jesus saw that their ruin was inevitable. In comparing their leaders to whitened sepulchres, filled with the bones of the dead, he virtually declared that the worm of death was gnawing at the foundation of the Jewish Church, that its last hour had struck, that it had become for mankind a *moral pestilence*. So is every Church that stands upon tradition, and is without moral power, without spiritual life. In the judgment of Jesus, the Pharisees were a brood of serpents, children of hell, murderers,—murderers of prophets and of souls. They had filled up the measure of their fathers. Their doom was sealed. The theocracy was ripe for destruction,—the future belonged to the Gospel.² The sound of the woe pronounced by Jesus has not yet died away; it is still ringing to-day, like a trumpet of judgment, over every Church that stands upon the statutes of tradition, and is ruled by a privileged clergy.

¹ Matt. xxiii. 6.

² Matt. xxiii. 27.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE FUTURE OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

1. FROM the certain conviction at which Jesus had arrived, that the Jewish theocracy had outlived itself, it necessarily followed that Israel itself had become ripe for a *final judgment*. With the impending death of Jesus, determined upon by the hierarchical party, the fate of Israel fulfilled itself; this death was a breath of death to Judaism expiring in its statutes, a breath of life to the world struggling for spiritual and moral deliverance. That the theocracy would not give up the schemes for recovering national independence, and for establishing a Messianic kingdom as they understood it, was self-evident. The coming conflict between Jerusalem's dream of the future, and Rome's world-dominion, could end only in the disappearance of the weaker party. Remarkable arrangement of Providence! At the very moment that the hierarchical party had resolved upon the death of Jesus, their own destruction, as a necessary event in the history of the world, was already sealed in the kingdom of God.

Before the assembled people, among whom there were many doubtless who had come on a pilgrimage to the Feast, Jesus delivered his stirring speech against the 'Scribes and Pharisees.' As to its consequences to himself, he was not for a moment deceived. Such a way of speaking could not be tolerated by the governing party, unless they were willing to resign the last remnant of their authority over their own adherents.

The presentiment of his approaching judicial condemnation and of a cruel ignominious death, threw an increasing shadow over the soul of Jesus, but in his inmost being there shone a clear beam of hope. To him belonged the ultimate victory, his enemies were ripe for destruction. Full of this thought he conversed with the twelve, and announced the approaching overthrow of the theocratic institution, the

downfall of Jerusalem, and the desecration of the holy places.¹ It was one of the most powerful and impressive of his utterances.

As he was *leaving* the outer courts of the temple, his eye involuntarily resting for awhile upon the yet unfinished splendid building, and some of his disciples breaking forth into exclamations of admiration, he was suddenly filled with an inexpressible sadness. 'Of all this there will not be left one stone upon another!'² he said, the sorrow of the prophet mingling with the consciousness of the future victor. The destruction of Jerusalem and the temple, the judgment upon the obdurate, hypocritical, immoral Church, is at the door. This announcement was the clearest proof to his disciples that his Messianic calling had nothing in common with the hopes of the theocracy. Upon their enquiring when these things should occur, he did not withhold his explanation. But here the Evangelists, in their report of it, differ materially. The first Evangelist states that the disciples further asked after the signs of the glorious reappearance of Christ, and the completion of the then existing period of the world;³ but the second and third Evangelists know nothing of such a question; and it is not likely that the disciples asked it, as they did not consider the death of Jesus so near at hand. The aim of Jesus in these predictions, was to warn his disciples,⁴ from whom he was soon to be separated for ever, of the dangers to which they would be exposed on the occurrence of that great catastrophe. He had already, at an earlier period, told them of the dangers and trials they had to meet in the work of establishing and extending a community founded upon principles purely spiritual and moral. The Gospel needed a *new soil*, new instruments and powers; not until the old temple fell could the new arise. So thoroughly were the old religions identified with the established civil order of things, with the national customs and the mental culture of the ante-Christian era, that the new religion, only after commotions and revolutions that would shake the world to its centre, could expect to obtain a peaceful position. With clear vision Jesus read the future of the history of the world; he saw that *war* must come,—war with all the horrors by which the arbitrament of arms is attended. That the Jewish hierarchy was advancing

¹ Mark xiii. 1; Matt. xxiv. 1; Luke xxi. 5.

² Mark xiii. 2; Matt. xxiv. 2; Luke xxi. 6.

³ Matt. xxiv. 3.

⁴ Mark xiii. 5; Matt. xxiv. 4; Luke xxi. 8.

towards a bloody and fatal conflict, a conflict in which it must perish, was plain to him beyond all doubt; and just as inevitable was it in his view, that *his community would suffer persecution*, not only from the Jewish Church before its fall, but far more from the civil authorities of the heathen world. This persecution he regarded as the greater woe, and he had no doubt that his followers would be called to encounter it before the judgment fell upon the city and the temple. Then would the spirits of men be tried; then would fidelity be put to the test; then would the Christian community be winnowed; then it was for the apostles to persevere to the end.

The *greatest woe* was, however, the *strife* that would arise within his own community; divisions would appear in the very sanctuary of converted households; the father would testify before the civil tribunal against his child, and brother against brother, the fierce flame of Gentile (and Jewish) fanaticism knowing no compassion; a man's own blood at war with itself; the nearest of kin delivering up the friends of the new faith to the executioner. The name 'Christ' becomes the symbol of hatred and terror against everyone that confesses him; in the days of these tribulations the weak would deny their Christian faith. War, persecution, the division of families, were, however, only precursors of the *end*.¹ But what idea did Jesus connect with the announcement of the 'end'?

By the end is mostly understood 'the end of the world,' but of this Jesus had not spoken. He used the expression simply to indicate the close of the Jewish and Gentile period, the termination of the so-called *old world*, which was to be succeeded by his Divine kingdom, or, as we express it, by the *Christian era*, the *new world*. The *destruction of Jerusalem and the temple*, the downfall of the theocratic worship, forms the real dividing line between an old and worn-out condition of things, and a new and expanding development of the life of the nations. With the fall of Jerusalem, and most especially with the *awful desecration and devastation of the holy place by the profane hand of the pagan soldier*,² the theocratic era was, in the eyes of Jesus, closed; priesthood, sacrificial offerings, and the rule of the clergy were at an end.

¹ Mark xiii. 13; Matt. xxiv. 13. ² Mark xiii. 14; Matt. xxiv. 15; Luke xxi. 20.

Jesus loved his country too ardently not to feel its fate most deeply, notwithstanding the obduracy it had exhibited towards him. Sad was he when he thought of the fugitive, the woman with child, the sucklings, the houseless in the winter-time. Besides the horrors of desolation, there would be the danger to his followers of being seduced from the truth. For, as Jesus knew, the more deluded part of the people would cling to the very last to this dream of the conquest of Rome and of universal empire; and the demagogues, fanatics, false representatives of the Messianic idea, which was truly fulfilled in him, would drag the weaker minds down into the whirlpool of confusion and ruin with themselves. That Jesus predicted at that time the destruction of Jerusalem, and the desolation of the temple, and pronounced these events to be the end of the theocracy, there can be no doubt. He did so in the prophetic consciousness of triumph, anticipating events, and seeing the future as his own; and he uttered the prophecy in the presence of those who, in transient possession of power, were vainly trying to revive the dying past. In this consciousness death had no horror for him; he was strengthened and elevated by the conviction that from his blood would stream life to the world.

2. But he is reported to have further told of extraordinary appearances in the firmament, the darkening of the sun and moon, strange manifestations in the heavens, and of his own return in person upon a throne of clouds, in pomp and majesty, with a retinue of angels, to gather his elect upon the earth.¹ As the disciples asked no questions requiring these disclosures, may it not be doubted whether he made such statements voluntarily? But that he gave some hints and intimations concerning the fate of his community after the overthrow of the theocracy, we may well suppose; for with the destruction of the City of the Temple, the *victory of the spiritual temple*, the Christian community, was sealed.

The saying of Jesus² that the Gospel would be preached to *all* nations, is preserved by the first two Evangelists; but they, taking it as a sign of the doom of Jerusalem, did not rightly comprehend it. It was the downfall of the theocracy

¹ Mark xiii. 24; Matt. xxiv. 29; Luke xxi. 25.

² Mark xiii. 10; Matt. xxiv. 14.

that gave a most powerful impulse to the diffusion of the Gospel in the heathen world; the community of Christ became then completely freed from its connection with Judaism, and free access into the community was opened for the Gentiles. The *Universal Christian Church* then had its beginning. Jesus rightly describes this period as the *period of his future*, of his second coming upon earth. Though not again in flesh and blood, he came in word and spirit, as is strikingly intimated in a subsequent apostolic epistle.¹

That, in describing this second period of his Messianic kingdom, Jesus made use of the figurative language familiar to the theocratic modes of thought, is very natural; and it is not to be wondered at that this language was misunderstood by the disciples, and interpreted as pointing to a personal reappearance of the Master, disposed as the apostolic community was to transfer its Jewish Messianic expectations to the person of Christ.

This belief in the second personal appearance of the Redeemer was then brought into immediate connection with the destruction of Jerusalem and the desolation of the temple.

As these last-mentioned events were not followed by the expected appearance of Christ, it became necessary, among the more thoughtful members of the Christian community, to take the future of Jesus in a *more spiritual sense*. The fourth gospel affords special evidence in point. In this gospel the discourse of Jesus, in which the destruction of Jerusalem, and the end of the then existing period of the world are announced, is entirely wanting. It cannot, however, escape observation that the essential idea of that discourse is taken up in what Jesus is reported by the fourth gospel to have said to his disciples when he took farewell of them just before his arrest.² When he there tells his disciples that he is going to the Father to prepare a place for them, and 'will come again' to take them to himself, and unite them to himself most intimately, he promises nothing less than a second coming to earth. But that this Evangelist did not understand by this second coming, a personal, bodily reappearance of Jesus, is apparent from the fact that the disciples were to

¹ Eph. ii. 17.

² John xiii.-xvii.

be comforted by a 'substitute' (paraclete, *i. e.* helper, advocate, in the place of the departed Jesus), who was to be with them for ever, and not, like Jesus, to be taken away from them.¹ They were not to be left orphans, for Jesus comes again *in his spirit*²—the spirit of truth. Through this spirit the disciples are in him and he in them.³

Thus, according to the fourth gospel, the expectation of the second coming of Jesus is transfigured into the expectation of the future revelation of his spirit within the circle of his 'own,' while to the world outside the sphere of the influence of his spirit, the coming of the Lord would be unknown. The Holy Spirit, as the future representative of Jesus, was to be the teacher of mankind in a much higher degree and with greater effect than Jesus himself had been. Such a mission the Spirit could have received only upon the presupposition that Jesus was not coming again in his own person. Therefore the Holy Spirit should in future bear witness regarding the person of Jesus,⁴ which was requisite only because he could no longer, in his own person, bear witness to himself. But Jesus considered his ascension to the Father and the substitution of the Holy Spirit in his place, as an indispensable condition of the further progress and more comprehensive development of his kingdom. According to the first Evangelist, he declared in the last discourse to his disciples, that with the close of the first period of the world he himself would sit in judgment upon all mankind.⁵ According to the fourth, he told his disciples that the Holy Spirit would judge the world; nay, more, that the prince of this world, the author of all evil, was judged already by the second period's having begun—the period of the Holy Spirit.⁶ Up to this moment, the religious and moral perceptions of the disciples had remained very imperfect; Jesus now promised them that the Holy Spirit would lead them farther and farther into the truth, in that way of life which he had opened. And thus the whole body of his followers would be made ever more perfect in the knowledge they needed of the Highest, under the guidance of the Spirit that would be given them, without their requiring a second personal appearance of Jesus.

3. The question whether the first three Evangelists, or the

¹ John xiv. 3, 16.

² John xiv. 18.

³ John xiv. 20.

⁴ John xv. 26.

⁵ Matt. xxiv. 30; xxv. 31.

⁶ John xvi. 7.

fourth, reproduce most faithfully the meaning of Jesus' discourse to his disciples in sight of the temple, cannot be allowed to go unanswered. That both the reports are based upon a closely allied tradition is indisputable. It is certain that the original subject of the discourse has almost wholly disappeared in the fourth gospel. No mention is made there of a calamity impending over Jerusalem, which arises from the great change that had taken place in the world when the fourth gospel was written. The victory of the Gospel over the world, which, according to the first Evangelist, depended upon the destruction of the seat of the theocracy, had, according to the fourth gospel, already for some time been accomplished,¹ and, moreover, was not dependent upon external conditions. But Jesus, in this gospel, also foretells a period of severe persecution for his disciples, and cannot suppress the apprehension that they might be shaken in their faith and fall away from the Gospel.² By the blind and obdurate world that knows him not, and thinks it does God a service in killing his disciples,³ Jesus intends particularly to refer to the ruling theocratic party; and, according to this representation also, a life-and-death conflict between that party and the Christian community was at hand. But it is not through the destruction of Jerusalem by the sword of Rome, but through the victory of the *spirit of truth*,⁴ that Jesus here looks to be glorified;⁵ and he is confident that his high character, for a brief period misunderstood, will be acknowledged in the future. The death-hour, with its horror and its shame, will soon be vanquished, and times of joyous exultation will succeed. Love and fidelity are the moral forces which Jesus commends as safeguards during the time of horror: *Love among the brethren*, in the spirit of that self-sacrifice of which he himself had given an example,⁶ and *fidelity of the disciples towards the Master*, which he described so impressively under the similitude of the vine and its branches, thereby representing his person as the spring of life, in communion with which the disciples draw unconquerable strength for new moral efforts and triumphs.⁷

Thus the fourth gospel faithfully reflects the true meaning of Jesus' discourse to his disciples in sight of the temple,

¹ John xvi. 33.

⁴ John xvi. 14.

⁷ John xv. 1.

² John xvi. 1.

⁵ John xvi. 16.

³ John xv. 18; xvi. 2.

⁶ John xv. 12.

but so far only as the future of his kingdom is concerned, having, however, no regard to the connection in which these things were said, or to the occasion that called them forth. In the most essential point it gives the real meaning more correctly than the first three gospels. In that interesting moment, under the pinnacles of the temple, whose beauty drew from his disciples expressions of admiring wonder, Jesus announced the speedy destruction of all that magnificence, and at the same time the *building up of the spiritual temple of his community*, through the power of his Word and his Spirit. This latter he represented as a second coming of himself; he spoke, in the strong figurative language of the Orient, of the world-shaking influence of this elevation of Christianity over the ruins of Judaism and heathenism, and probably connected its occurrence with great physical phenomena. The apostolic community had not yet reached the height of this view of the Master, Christian tradition was not yet able to rise to this faith in the power of the Word and the Spirit. Thus the clear Divine thoughts of Jesus in regard to the future have been turned into gross earthly expectations. Thus the Chiliasm in the representation of the first three gospels, is an unhealthy excrescence of the Jewish Messianic expectation still lingering unconquered in Christianity, a remnant of the religion of the letter within the religion of the Spirit and of truth.¹

¹ See Appendix, III. 27.

SEVENTH SECTION.

THE CONSUMMATION.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE CONSECRATION IN BETHANY.

1. WHILE the events just related were taking place, the time of the Passover was drawing nigh. The crowds of pilgrims increased in the holy city. The strict hierarchical party in the High Council had for some time been resolved upon the prosecution of Jesus, but doubts appear to have arisen whether it should be undertaken immediately, during the season of the festival, or be deferred till the festival was over. Danger was apprehended from his numerous friends among the Galileans who had come to the Passover, yet a further delay had also its dangers. On the one hand, the adherents of Jesus might, according to the opinion of the hierarchy, rise against the ruling party; on the other hand, Jesus might escape to Galilee. But opportunity was given for immediate proceedings by the unexpected overtures of one of the twelve, Judas of Kerioth, who informed the leaders of the hierarchy that he was ready to deliver his Master into their hands in a manner that would cause the least possible disturbance. How came an 'apostle' to sink to the level of a traitor? A dark page in the history of the Redeemer here lies before us; will light ever be shed upon it?

If, according to traditionary supposition, Jesus were omniscient, or even had he been endowed with superhuman or supernatural knowledge, he must have known when he called Judas to be one of the twelve, that he was taking a serpent to his bosom, training up a future traitor, a child of

darkness. In this case the grave question presents itself, with all the weight of its unavoidable inferences, how Jesus, notwithstanding his foreknowledge of the certain treachery of Judas, came to receive him into immediate fellowship, and into the service of his sacred cause? If he were convinced that Judas could never become a worthy instrument in his service, why did he call him into his service? If he knew that he had taken a traitor to his bosom, why did he not send him away? If he were indubitably certain that the connection of Judas with him and his cause must become the temporal and eternal ruin of Judas, why did he not break at once the fatal tie? The first would have been necessary for the sake of the Gospel, the second for the sake of his own person, the third for the sake of Judas. Upon the supposition that Jesus had, from the beginning, exact knowledge of the fate of Judas, it was the duty of wisdom, of self-respect and of love to mankind, either not to have made the connection with Judas, or to have dissolved it as soon as possible. We are delivered from these difficulties by the supposition that Jesus, when he received Judas among his immediate disciples, did *not* foresee the future treachery, and that when he began to doubt the moral purity of Judas, he was not without hope of keeping the unhappy man from the path of destruction.

The relation to Judas is of great significance in estimating the character of Jesus, on which account it requires a thorough consideration. Judas was not one of the first disciples that were called, but joined them when the number was being made up to twelve.¹ He was neither placed by Jesus in a prominent position, nor the reverse; and in the short missionary excursions upon which Jesus sent his disciples, Judas was doubtless employed with the rest. The circumstance that he had charge of the bag is mentioned only in the fourth gospel.² That Jesus should have trusted him with this, ought, from the point of view of this gospel, to be the more unlikely, as, according to this same gospel, Jesus considered Judas to be a 'devil,' and recognized him from the first as his future betrayer.

2. That Jesus knew Judas from the beginning to be a thoroughly bad man, and yet received him among the twelve, is altogether impossible. There is reason to suppose, rather,

¹ Mark iii. 19; Matt. x. 4; Luke vi. 16.

² John xii. 6; xiii. 29.

that it was not until during the last abode of Jesus in Judea, and in consequence of the last discourse of Jesus to his disciples near the temple, that the thought of apostacy took a definite shape in the mind of Judas. At an earlier period he, like the rest of the disciples, had been in a state of uncertainty as to the real life-aim of Jesus; later on he shared in the error that Jesus would establish the Messiah's kingdom promised by the Old Testament prophets, and would not withhold from his disciples a due participation in its government, power, and glory. The solemn entrance of Jesus into Jerusalem, amidst the acclamations of the people, may have tended to confirm him in this error. But the scene in the temple, the declaration of Jesus that the theocratic temple-service would come to an end, his complications with the ecclesiastical authorities, his disclosures made with increasing emphasis respecting the violent and shameful death near at hand, and the dark fate awaiting his disciples, perhaps also some secret intelligence received in regard to the hostile measures resolved upon by the High Council against Jesus—all these things were crushing blows for Judas, thirsting for honour and power. Instead of dominion—service, instead of power—persecution, instead of honour—shame; this was all that was left of his hopes and prospects, once so brilliant. A *sudden and complete awaking from so great a delusion* best explains the sudden revolution of feeling within the man, who held himself to have been grossly deceived.

It escaped him, in his gross blindness, that he had deceived himself. He rushed at once into a state of furious exasperation. The ideals of his life had vanished in a moment. A stern fate, like that which had been so plainly foretold to him, he was not man enough to bear. The love he had borne to Jesus turned to hatred; for he looked upon Jesus as the author of the torments which he suffered upon awaking from his delusion. This exasperation, this hatred, appears at once to have broken forth two days before the Passover, in Bethany. What occurred there has come down to us, through the different channels of tradition, in somewhat different forms. The accounts, however, pretty well agree in substance:¹ a woman anoints Jesus; disciples

¹ Mark xiv. 3; Matt. xxvi. 6; Luke vii. 36; John xii. 1. See also Appendix, III. 28.

(or a disciple at least, a Pharisee according to the third gospel) are displeased with the act of the woman, and reprove her; and Jesus commends the act. In the third gospel, the essential part of the occurrence has suffered very considerable alteration. The contents of the whole narrative are in full keeping with the immediate proximity of the final catastrophe. The outpoured ointment is a most expressive symbol of devoted love in a disciple foreseeing and fearing the worst. It is appropriate also that Jesus should interpret this act as a consecration to his approaching death.

This touching expression of the love of one, distinguished for her fidelity even to death, appears to have kindled into a flame the hate smouldering within Judas. He, a disciple, frantic at the shipwreck of all the hopes which, in his effervescent but impure enthusiasm, he had identified with the person of Jesus—she, a disciple, invigorated and elevated by the certainty that Jesus, as the true Messiah, had now rejected for ever all earthly hopes, and was resolved to seal the work of his life with his blood—what sharp contrasts! The consecration at Bethany by that disciple became the Master's consecration to death. The twelve, with Judas doubtless at their head, murmured at this act of love, concealing their indignation under the pretext that the money for which the precious ointment might have been sold, would have been more profitably employed in the service of love, if it had been given to the poor. Jesus was known as the counsellor and helper of the needy and the suffering; how much want might have been relieved by so large a sum? How many cries of the hungry might have been stilled? The reproachful remark of the disciples arose under the erroneous impression that it was the special work of Jesus to alleviate *external* misery. The woman, with greater truth, recognized in him the deliverer from *inner* misery, and thus she saw the necessity of his offering up his life in the service of his holy cause. She felt the need of giving to this death a symbolical consecration, the more so as those who had given themselves to his work did not yet appear to have a right comprehension of the necessity for his sacrificial death. They would rather have anointed him for ascending the throne upon Zion than for elevation on the cross upon Golgotha.

3. But how significant is the reply that Jesus gives to the

reproach of the disciples! It contains no trace of severity or bitterness; from first to last it is characteristic of Jesus that prejudices, and even passions, springing from mistaken suppositions and expectations, were dealt with by him with the greatest tenderness. The sympathy for the poor, which expressed itself in the utterance of the disciples, was in itself commendable, but this sympathy might at all times be manifested. That compassion awakened in us when we see others destitute of what we have enough of, or of what we possess to superfluity, springs from a love to men akin to selfishness, and exists even in unconverted men. In the words, 'The poor ye have always with you, and when ye will ye can do them good,' Jesus plainly recognizes the duty of the Christian community to care for their poor. But this is a *common* duty. At that moment there was a *special and higher* duty to be fulfilled. The stubborn mind, ever flattering itself with false Messianic hopes, had to be bent. The disciples had to rise to the highest insight into the kingdom of God: that faith in the future of this kingdom had to prove itself in sacrificing love. The idea of a *suffering and dying* Messiah, of such a Messiah as the establishing of a New Covenant required, had yet to be acknowledged and truly appreciated in its necessity, power and glory by the greater number of the community. The deep significance of the anointing in Bethany lay in this, that it gave expression, simple, intelligible, and touching, to this acknowledgment and this appreciation. The singleness of eye of a woman had seen farther than the keen sight of these men; she, with her deep sensibility, had understood the future more truly than they in their calculations. What Jesus said in commendation of her act has been handed down most accurately by the second gospel: 'She hath done what she could; she is come aforehand to anoint my body to the burying; verily I say unto you, wheresoever the Gospel shall be preached for the whole world, there also what she hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her.'¹ Thus Jesus closely connected this deed of love, the anointing, with the future proclamation of his Gospel in the heathen world; which proclamation was principally the announcement of his death of love, not only as a fountain of power, of elevation,

¹ Mark xiv. 8.

of sanctification for all the members of his community, but also as the indispensable condition of the abolition of the theocratic statute, and the recognition of the religious equality of Jews and Gentiles. The woman who anointed him was the first to discern, in its full worth, this significance of his death in relation to the future, and to give expression to this faith of hers by that symbolical act.

Thus she presents the sharpest and noblest contrast to Judas, who, by his uncontrollable rage, suffered himself to be carried away to betray his Lord and Master. *She gives* her money in order worthily to celebrate the approaching sacrificial death of Jesus, conscious of the blessing that would flow therefrom. *He takes* money from the hands of the deadly enemies of Jesus, in order to get, at any rate, as much profit as possible through the connection with Jesus, now hateful to him, and by helping to accelerate his death. In the first case, we have the most child-like self-forgetfulness, the pure spirit that takes nothing for itself, but would give all in love to the departing Master, going to his death. In the other case, we have the basest self-love, the darkened heart awakening from great delusion in bitter hate, deeming no means too base to satisfy its revenge and selfishness. From secret interviews with persons sent to him by the hierarchical party, Judas was probably convinced that Jesus' death had become inevitable. What then could he do more advantageous for himself than, under such circumstances, turn this death to his own advantage? The love of gain was only a secondary motive for his treachery. The prime motive was revenge. Not with cool calculating selfishness did he go to his work. Could Jesus have ever admitted a cunning self-seeker among his disciples? Judas was a man of a choleric temperament, excitable, easily offended, rash in his resolutions, hasty in his acts. This he has also shown by his death, probably by his own hand.¹ His repentance after the condemnation of Jesus was sincere.² It could hardly have been, as is supposed by many, that it was the shock caused by the unexpected result of the trial of Jesus, that led him to lay violent hands on himself, but rather the agonizing self-reproach that he felt at the treachery of which, in his

¹ Matt. xxvii. 5. Less credible is the later tradition (Acts i. 18), according to which he did not hang himself, but lost his life by a fall.

² Matt. xxvii. 4.

blind rage, he had been guilty. His case illustrates the moral law, which experience attests, that the sins of passion come home to the deluded conscience, first through their consequences, too late to make reparation to men, but not too late to be expiated before God.

Thus viewing the case of Judas, it is not inexplicable that Jesus should have decided to receive him into the company of the apostles. When Jesus called him, he was, on the whole, no better and no worse than his associates. He also had set his hopes upon the 'consolation of Israel,' he also looked for the fulfillment of them through the restoration of a renewed theocratic institution. When Jesus first asserted his Messiahship Judas also believed in a coming theocratic world-empire under the sceptre of Jesus. With passionate devotion he would have co-operated in setting up the Messianic throne. Jesus trusted that he, as well as the other disciples, would, in due time, undergo a moral change, which, unhappily for Judas, did not come. It is only at critical moments that men are put to the proof; Judas succumbed in the hour of temptation. This issue casts no shade upon the character of Jesus. He had erred in his judgment of Judas, but the error sprang from the purest motives. He hoped for a gradual moral purifying of the will, for an ultimate conquest of the prejudices and passions of his disciple. That the vision of Judas became darkened in the hour of danger, and that his will succumbed to the power of darkness, was an event not to be foreseen, one of the heaviest sorrows that befell Jesus during his thorny career. On the very threshold of the crisis, he beheld the little band of his most intimate friends divided between love and hatred; most of them undecided, fearful, without courage, and one of them filled with the bitterest rancour. Into this cup of sorrow the woman who anointed him in Bethany poured a drop of soothing balm; *she* had understood the person and work of the Master; in her loving and hopeful soul his kingdom had found a firm place. Like a seer, she pointed from the nocturnal shades of death to the morning splendour of a brighter future. The consecrating to a sacrificial death by the hand of that gentle disciple, was the consecration of Jesus' life-work on earth. Anointed with the oil of love he went, tranquilly and courageously, in the collectedness of the wise, and in the resoluteness of the martyr, to meet his direful fate.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE LORD'S SUPPER.

1. ON the evening of the fourteenth of the month Nisan, at the time appointed by law for the Paschal lamb to be eaten, Jesus desired to eat the Passover with his disciples. It is somewhat surprising that he should have had this desire, since he had rejected the claims of the ceremonial law, and had but lately completely broken with the theocratic institution. On this account many prefer the representation of the fourth gospel, according to which he did not observe the Passover, but partook with his intimate friends of a parting meal, which had no relation to the Passover,¹ the day before that appointed for the feast, on the evening of the thirteenth day of Nisan. We regard, however, the unanimous statement of the first three gospels as entitled to credit, that he celebrated a real Paschal meal on the evening of the fourteenth of Nisan, with his disciples. The account of the fourth Evangelist is throughout encumbered with serious difficulties. If its correctness be assumed, it is especially difficult to understand how the tradition, that Jesus partook of the Paschal lamb with his disciples could have arisen—a tradition followed by the other three Evangelists, and attested by the original report of Mark, who derived his information from the statements of Peter. Still more inexplicable is it that the fourth gospel omits, together with the Paschal feast, the institution of the Lord's Supper, which, according to the first three gospels, stood in indissoluble connection with it. It certainly is incredible that Jesus should celebrate a Paschal meal in the *ordinary theocratic meaning of the word*, but this, even according to the first three gospels, he *did not* do. As is clear from their account, Jesus simply made use of the legally prescribed Paschal meal in order to institute, in immediate connection therewith, another meal—

¹ John xiii. 1-29; xviii. 28; xix. 14, 31.

the Supper of the *New Covenant*. Accordingly he celebrated the Passover, not to confirm, but to abolish it. The celebration of the last Passover connects itself necessarily with the celebration of the first Lord's Supper—the abolition of the Old Covenant with the inauguration of the New.

The Paschal meal, therefore, which Jesus celebrated on the festival evening with his disciples is but the last indispensable link of a series of preceding preparatory acts: a solemn concluding act of his life-work in view of death, and the formal act of *instituting his community*. Without such a conclusion the work of Jesus on earth would have lacked completeness. He would, once more before his departure, declare in the midst of his apostles, with the utmost solemnity, and by a symbolical act stamping itself on the memory for all times, that the Old Covenant had now come to an end, and that a New Covenant had taken its place. Thus the celebration of the Paschal meal stands in significant connection with the consecration at Bethany. The death that awaited Jesus, to which, with a true understanding of it, the woman had consecrated him, had to be placed by the Master before the disciples under the pure light of the future of the kingdom of God; for the deeper significance of the death of Jesus was not yet seen by them. He must set it before their eyes with convincing power, as the imperishable *foundation of a new spiritual communion between God and all mankind*.

2. But of the last meal of Jesus with his disciples, thus understood, there is no trace in the fourth gospel. There is a supper mentioned,¹ but not this Supper; the washing of the disciples' feet, and a series of long discourses of the Master in connection therewith, occupies the interest of the Evangelist. That the washing of the disciples' feet, related by this Evangelist only, is based upon a fact, there can be no doubt. But, at the same time, it is certain that if Jesus, at the conclusion of the last meal with his disciples, instituted the Lord's Supper, he could not at that time have also washed the feet of the disciples. Two symbolical acts, so essentially different, and so unlike in aim, could not have taken place on one and the same occasion; the impression of one would necessarily have obliterated the impression of the other. As, moreover,

¹ John xiii. 2.

the washing of the disciples' feet had no relation to the death of Jesus,—that essential condition of the New Covenant,—it cannot be supposed that it took place at that parting hour. It must have occurred at an earlier period. The representation of the fourth gospel shows, in that portion devoted to the last hours of the Redeemer, the same peculiar colouring, the same ground-tone, which we have seen in its earlier chapters. Already, before the death of Jesus, everything is accomplished and completed. The disciples, with the exception of the traitor, are clean ; ¹ they require no further cleansing save from special failings. Jesus himself is already glorified, and God is glorified in him.² According to such representations, an institution like the Lord's Supper was by no means needed. To what purpose the distribution of earthly bread, where the person of Jesus Christ is the only true bread which comes from Heaven ? ³ To what purpose the dispensing of earthly wine, where his person is the living water which springs up into everlasting life ? ⁴ Faith in his person stills all hunger and quenches all thirst. It is not merely the giving of himself to the death of the cross at the end of his career, but it is the giving of his flesh for the world, which is a heavenly source of nourishment for the world.⁵ Therefore are the Jews called upon to eat the flesh and drink the blood of the *living* Christ.⁶ How remote from the point of view of this gospel the thought of partaking of *material* food for spiritual nourishment, is shown by the remark that the *spirit* makes alive, that the *flesh* profits nothing, and that also the words of Jesus, in order to be a source of nourishment to the world, are spirit and life.⁷ There is no doubt that, at the time when the fourth gospel was composed, an idea of a magical efficacy had already become connected with the celebration of the Lord's Supper,—an idea which the Evangelist held himself bound to combat. A presentiment of the incomprehensible misunderstandings and fatal misuses by which the observance of the Lord's Supper has been overcast in later times, and which has rendered it the most fruitful source of superstition and strife, appears to have risen before the mind of the Evangelist ; and he probably thought that he might do somewhat to check the threat-

John xiii. 10.

John iv. 14.

⁷ John vi. 63.

² John xiii. 31.

⁵ John vi. 51.

⁶ John vi. 33.

⁴ John vi. 53.

ening danger by not mentioning the institution at all in his gospel, although it must, without doubt, have been known to him as an institution of Jesus Christ. And this may be the reason why he placed the parting meal of the Lord a day earlier, and connected it with the washing of the disciples' feet,—an act which was peculiarly fitted to humble the pride of the priesthood, to which pride, contrary to the original design of the founder, the Lord's Supper in later time gave a main support.

3. Jesus really held with his disciples the Paschal supper on the evening of the fourteenth day of Nisan, as the unprejudiced Palestinian tradition attests.¹ Jesus had seen through the designs of Judas, and had not crossed them; he could not now have effected any essential change in his fate. He well knew that, by a strict construction of the statutes of the Old Covenant, his life was forfeited. He had no doubt that his enemies would not rest until they had delivered him to death. That his death had become necessary to the future development and establishment of the kingdom of God he was profoundly convinced. He took no step either to hasten the catastrophe or to prevent it. With the calmest self-possession he allowed events to take their destined course, and it is this repose of mind which most fully illustrates the unity and greatness of his character. To succumb to an unforeseen fate requires neither courage nor wisdom. To combat a fate that is foreseen demands courage, but does not under all circumstances show wisdom. It calls for the highest degree of courage, and the largest measure of wisdom, to see a terrible fate approaching, having a clear conviction that it is unavoidable, and never to waver in the determination to accept it without a murmur, and bear it with perfect calmness. It was in such a lofty frame of mind that Jesus seated himself at table on the evening of the fourteenth of Nisan, with his disciples, in accordance with arrangements previously made, and in a chamber especially prepared for the occasion, with no other witnesses than those who had thus far been his companions in his sufferings, his conflicts, and his successes. The traitor was present with the rest; he intended to accompany his Master, after the supper, to the garden, whither the servants of the men in authority had

¹ See Appendix, Ill. 1 and 2.

been ordered to go to arrest Jesus. Why did not Jesus exclude Judas from the communion of the Supper? This appears inexplicable. We know of but one possible explanation. The crime was not yet committed. The traitor might yet come to reflection, and the spark of repentance be kindled, which afterwards, when it was too late, flamed forth within him, a consuming fire. Were not the thrilling words of Jesus during supper, that one who was sitting at table with him would betray him, and that it were better for that man if he had not been born,¹ a last attempt to awaken the slumbering conscience of the disciple?

It was, as Jesus knew with certainty, not only the last Passover that he celebrated, but thenceforth there should be no longer a celebration of the Passover. An intimation that this celebration of the Passover was to bring the Old Covenant to an end for ever, has particularly been preserved in the third gospel.² According to this gospel, Jesus solemnly declared that he would thenceforth no more eat of *this* Passover, but that it would find its *fulfillment* in the kingdom of God, *i. e.* in the new community instituted by him. The Passover in the Old Covenant was a feast commemorative of liberation from the yoke of heathen oppression, celebrated in every household, at whose head the father of the house stood as priest. This liberation was first truly realized in the New Covenant community, *by the Gentiles being taken up into the Divine Covenant*; and thus was the Old Testament Passover fulfilled. But now, when, notwithstanding this fulfillment, the institution of the *New Covenant* was consecrated by a new symbolical act, which was to take the place of the Passover, it required further explanation. The Passover was a festival of the community of the theocratic Covenant, celebrated at home within the family circle. The idea of theocratic discipline and exclusiveness lay at the foundation of it; in it the members of the family, sanctified to the Lord, united in expressing their joy at the mercy shown to Israel. No uncircumcised³ or unclean⁴ person was permitted to take part in the meal. The non-observance of the festival was, according to the later construction of the law, threatened

¹ Mark xiv. 18; Matt. xxvi. 23; Luke xxii. 21. This expression of Jesus is evidently placed by Luke wrongly after the institution of the Lord's Supper.

² Luke xxii. 16.

³ Exod. xii. 43.

⁴ Numb. ix. 7.

with death.¹ Thus this festival, otherwise so elevating, was surrounded with the terrors of the law.

Such a ceremony was wholly at variance with the spirit and character of Jesus. His aim had rather been to break down the narrow limitations of the theocratic statute, to offer salvation to the uncircumcised, when they repented and believed, upon the same terms with the circumcised. And he based the future of his kingdom, not on the penal law, but on the pitying love of God. His whole public life had been an expression of this love, but his death was fully to reveal it. This death, and in this death the liberating, redeeming, and reconciling love of God, which opens the door of the Divine kingdom to the whole Gentile world—this it was that Jesus now desired to celebrate with his disciples. The depth of this love could but partially be expressed to the common understanding in a formula, in words or ideas. Full expression was to be given to it by a *symbolical act*—an act at the same time adapted to make every partaker appear as a participator in the highest Divine gifts of love.

4. *The death of Jesus had become a moral necessity.* We have already seen that he had deliberately and boldly transgressed the theocratic statutes, and had engaged in a life-and-death conflict with the hierarchy. This conflict must be carried on to the end; it could not be broken off, or partially carried through. The theocratic institution must fall; but this result was possible only if the hero who had raised the sword of the Spirit against it, were ready to devote himself to death. He must fall a sacrifice at the hand of the law, that the law itself might be sacrificed. It was to be made manifest to every unprejudiced mind, in the appalling fact of his death, that the law which condemned him was unjust towards him, that a cruel and atrocious legal murder was perpetrated upon him, and that the sharp and severe points of the statute could now but effect the destruction of whatever was pure and noble, but not preserve it—could ruin but not save mankind. The execution of Jesus on the cross, resolved upon and decreed by the lawfully constituted authorities, by the Jewish High Council and the Roman Procurator, carried out in the most cruel and ignominious form, without mitigation and without human feeling, must, in its consequences, re-

¹ Numb. ix. 13.

bound not on the innocent victim, but on the guilt-laden statute. The death of Jesus, which was to have been at once a curse and a shame, became a source of blessing and honour to him who suffered it. The pitying love, as the representative of which he died, became the accuser of the heartless law, the letter of which had killed him. Jesus was acquitted; the law was placed at the bar, and with it the whole theocratic system. The hierarchy was now judged, its statutes condemned; its fanaticism became an object of abhorrence through the Cross, which was exalted into the symbol of innocence, purity, truth, righteousness, love, and freedom. These moral powers, the living roots of the kingdom of God, now came to honour among the nations, and the dead and death-bringing statute was consigned to impotency and shame.

Jesus clearly foresaw this effect of his death, and therefore he regarded it as a fountain of salvation and *redemption* for mankind. But he saw in it likewise a means of our *reconciliation* with God, and of *expiation* for our sins. Even under the Old Covenant, reconciliation and expiation were provided in case of a transgression of the law of God, but within very narrow limits; for no means of expiation existed for the conscious and deliberate violation of the statutes. According to the Old Testament, there was no expiation possible for the assaults which Jesus had made upon the theocracy. His shameful death, as the consequence of a persistent, intentional transgression of the theocratic statute, was, in the eyes of fanatical Jews, the just punishment of the great crime he had committed against the sanctity of their venerated traditions. This death now became the expiation for the sins of the world, because the blessed consequences flowing from it did away with the condemnatory effect of the statute; because through it the knowledge was imparted to mankind that God did not judge sin by the standard of the dead letter; and because, in that death, the righteousness of God appeared in an entirely new light—as an efflux of eternal wisdom and love. In the death of Jesus love gained a victory over hatred, liberty triumphed over compulsory statutes, the spirit over the letter, truth over its semblance, eternal Divine right over the caprice of human custom. But, as every true revelation of love is a sacrifice, the death of Jesus being the highest proof of love

that a man could give on earth, is therefore the sacrifice of sacrifices. Out of love to God and man, he offered himself a sacrifice to the statute that kills, in order, by his death, to abolish it for ever, as the greatest obstacle in the way of true religion and morality. How natural was it then that he should consider his death as the fulfillment of the Old Testament sacrifice, and that, as the Paschal lamb was, in a certain sense, a lamb of *sacrifice*, he should appear to himself, in his impending suffering and death on the cross, as the Paschal lamb of the New Covenant. This idea of his death passed before his mind during the last Paschal meal celebrated with his disciples. From this we may understand what occurred at the conclusion of the repast.

The institution of the Lord's Supper is seen in its true light only when taken in connection with the Old Testament Passover, and looked upon as the higher fulfillment of it in the New Covenant. What a moment of holy consecration was that, when, at the conclusion of the supper, Jesus took bread, blessed it, broke it, and gave it to his disciples with the words, 'Take, this is my body.'¹ Immediately afterwards he took the cup, spoke the thanksgiving, and handed it to his disciples to drink, with the words, 'This is my blood, the blood of the Covenant, shed for many.' And he added, he would no more drink of the Paschal wine till he drank it new in the kingdom of God. Whether he said anything further to his disciples at the distribution of the bread and wine is doubtful; it is more probable that tradition has made addition than omitted one authentic word. The admonition contained also in Paul's account of the Lord's Supper, namely, that the supper was to be repeated in commemoration of the death of Jesus,² is probably an addition of the later apostolic tradition, although it was doubtless the intention of Jesus that the celebration of the New Covenant should, like that of the Old, be repeated from time to time,³ yet leaving the community at full liberty in the matter.

To offer to his disciples the new Paschal lamb to partake of as a symbol, and thereby solemnly to seal the New Covenant, in view of his approaching death, was the purpose for which the Lord's Supper was instituted. Bread and

¹ Mark xiv. 22.² 1 Cor. xi. 24, &c.³ See Appendix, III. 29.

wine Jesus regarded as symbols of his own person consecrated to the sacrificial death on the cross. As, under the Old Covenant, the Paschal lamb had to be partaken of in order to refresh and strengthen the community in their faith in the redeeming power and grace of the Lord, so now his person, the Paschal lamb of the New Covenant, was to be partaken of in order to refresh and strengthen the community of the New Covenant in their faith in the redeeming and liberating love of God, as it appeared in him. The Old Covenant rested emphatically upon a *legal* foundation, and therefore the partaking of the Passover was, especially, a legal observance. The New Covenant rests emphatically upon a *moral* foundation, and therefore the partaking of the Paschal lamb of the New Testament was especially to be a moral one. Bread and wine, therefore, were to be merely the expressive means of representing what the death of Jesus for the salvation of the world was in reality. No more unprofitable strife has been carried on for centuries than that which relates to the words with which the Lord's Supper was instituted: 'This is my body,' 'This is my blood.' Jesus, using the Aramæan dialect, did not use the connecting 'is.' Taking the words literally, the conclusion is unavoidable, that at the very moment of the Lord's Supper the bread was changed by Jesus into his flesh, and the wine into his blood. But flesh and blood as such, according to the express declaration of Jesus,¹ profit nothing. There is only one way of partaking of the supper that has worth and effect in the kingdom of God: the spiritual and moral partaking of the sacrifice made for mankind by Jesus on the cross, the partaking of that holy love revealed in his death, of the reconciliation and reunion of sinful humanity with God.

As the Old Covenant depended upon the stern discipline of the law, so the New Covenant depends upon voluntary self-devotion, upon pitying love. Jesus, in dedicating, by the Lord's Supper, his community to *a brotherhood united by free love*, thereby impressed upon the community its distinguishing character, its ineffaceable moral significance, its seal from heaven. Its distinguishing character; for he founded his community not upon human statute

¹ John vi. 63.

and prescription, but upon a Divine fact and a Divine imparting: upon faith in the free grace of God, a faith which cannot be awakened by force, but must be experienced in the conscience and felt in the heart. Of such a faith the Old Testament theocracy knew nothing, and would know nothing. Its moral significance; for in the institution of the Lord's Supper he put with impressive simplicity before the community that they, founded upon faith in the proofs of Divine love, so likewise bound to one another by proofs of mutual love, were in all gentleness, consideration, patience, fidelity, and willingness to serve—to bear with, sustain, and forward each other. Finally, its seal from heaven; for in the Lord's Supper he instituted the most intimate communion of the members of his community with his person, accredited by the testimony of the Heavenly Father. He thus testified that his death was of value to his community, not only in the sense that it should bring him before their minds as an external example of historical remembrance, but that he should be taken up into their own life, as a source, full of infinite Divine powers for spiritual and moral life and strength, so that they should be continually nourished, refreshed and sanctified by him.

5. Thus, doubtless, Jesus had no other purpose with regard to the Lord's Supper than to give it a symbolical meaning, as the oldest apostolic tradition understood it.¹ He desired to institute it as a means of recalling and bringing vividly before the community the influences of his death. For not upon prescribed acts, neither upon church-works, depends our position towards God and our usefulness in the Divine kingdom. The Lord's Supper, in itself, is only an external act, it can easily become a dead matter of custom; it has become a legal formality to a great part of Christendom to this very day, against the design, the spirit, the express will of its founder.

It is evident, from this danger to which the institution of the Lord's Supper is so imminently exposed, that Jesus *gave no direct command* for its observance to be repeated at stated times. He has left it as a free ordinance of the community; as a mere external act it has no value; it must be *filled with spiritual and moral reality* by the com-

¹ Luke xxii. 19; 1 Cor. xi. 24.

munity.¹ The bread and wine in the Lord's Supper are mere symbols, and everything symbolical in religion still rests upon the stand-point of law. Until the kingdom of God has reached the period of its full development, it cannot entirely dispense with symbols, but it is the duty of the members of this kingdom to convert the ideas veiled in symbolic forms into spirit and life. That community truly observes the Lord's Supper, in which the sacrifice on the cross has become spirit and life, in which practical evidence is borne toward God and man, that the love of Jesus, sealed on the cross, is working within. The celebration of the Lord's Supper is therefore a means for the community, of promoting a vigorous Christian life, and of following out in their own lives the self-sacrificing love of the Redeemer. If Judas, as is very probable, partook of the Lord's Supper, the fact that Jesus did not forbid him, proves all attempts by external discipline to purify the communion of the Lord's Supper from unworthy members to be doubtful and worthless.

Since Jesus *himself* did not exclude from the communion of the supper *him* of whom he said that it would have been better for him if he had never been born, it surely is not advisable *for us* to drive from the table of the Lord such as we, according to *our* narrow and short-sighted judgment, hold to be unworthy. It must have been deeply painful to Jesus to have the traitor present at the founding of the New Covenant. If he endured that pain, bore that offence, it can only have been from his desire to preserve the supper from even the appearance of being a legal formality. He required from those who partook of it no special preparation, nor did he exact a previous confession before the first communion. Unconditional *freedom of participation* was allowed to all. Thus has Paul also treated the institution; 'let a man examine himself and so,' *i.e.* after previous free personal self-examination, 'let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup.'² What would Jesus have thought of those who make assent to a set dogmatic formula the *indispensable condition* of a participation in the Lord's Supper? Never before had Jesus stood at so lofty a height as at the moment of instituting the Lord's Supper. With a violent death before him, expecting from his disciples, in their weakness of character,

¹ Luke xxii. 16.

² Cor. xi. 28.

neither help nor comfort, without prospect for the victory of his cause from men, thrown with his hopes and expectations only upon his Heavenly Father, and upon the truth and power inherent in his life-work; and uniting with all this such elevated repose, such still submission, and also such perfect patience with him who at this very moment was meditating the basest treachery! A brief storm, however, was to rise in this, until now untroubled calm of his mind.

CHAPTER XXVI.

GETHESEMANE.

1. JESUS rose from supper to take, according to custom, his evening walk to a garden at the foot of the Mount of Olives. It may be that he was drawn more strongly than ever at this time to the repose of that quiet spot, and into the presence of nature. Sad thoughts arose in his soul upon the way. He had celebrated with his disciples a meal of most intimate communion, his dedication to death; but had they really understood the true significance of this impressive act? There was still nothing more disquieting to them than the thought of pain and death, they were still unable to comprehend why it was necessary that their Master should suffer and die. What will they do when the very next hour the fearful blow shall fall upon his head? To all of them his path of suffering will be a stumbling-block and an offence. Cowardly and faithless, they will turn away from him in the hour of peril,—leave him to his fate, to save themselves from sharing in it. Such were the thoughts that moved the soul of Jesus on his way to the garden, and he could not conceal them from the disciples who accompanied him.

They had deceived themselves about their own state of mind—were confident that they possessed all the courage, resolution, readiness for self-sacrifice that could be desired. Therefore they were wounded by the remarks of Jesus. Their spokesman, Simon Peter, in the name and with the assent of all, asserted their joyful willingness to share the adverse fortunes of their Master. Such self-delusion in those who had just received the consecration of the New Covenant must have filled Jesus with still more painful emotions. Now he felt it to be his imperative duty to tell the self-confident Peter of the deep fall of which he would soon be guilty; but it awakened neither the conscience of Peter nor of his com-

panions. They declared themselves ready to give up their lives for the cause of Jesus; big words, loud protestations, and for the doing, neither strength nor courage. All were oppressed as with a mountain's weight; each felt that a decisive hour was at hand. In such a frame of mind they reached the garden at the foot of the Mount of Olives, whither Judas had hastened on before, and where he had directed the officers charged with the execution of the orders of the High Council to meet him. Jesus, on his part, oppressed with the presentiment, not only of the cruel and shameful death that awaited him, but also of the weakness and faithlessness by which his disciples would disgrace themselves; the disciples, on their part, in that defiant and presuming state of mind which, with the most exalted idea of self, unites feeble insight and an untried will.

A profound sadness had taken possession of Jesus, which took more and more the character of an inward agony and conflict of soul. The fourth gospel makes no mention of such a conflict; it would not have harmonized with the representation which this gospel gives of the person of Jesus, of his state of mind, and of his bearing in these last hours of his life. Jesus had certainly, according to this gospel, on the evening of his arrest, a presentiment of his impending violent death;—‘But a little while I am with you,’ said he to his disciples.¹ And to the question whither he was going, he replied that he was going ‘whither Peter could not follow him then, but would follow him afterwards.’² Likewise according to this gospel, Peter declares himself ready to lay down his life for Jesus, and the Master warns him and predicts his subsequent denial. So far the representation of the fourth gospel follows a tradition kindred to the Palestinian.

But just at the point at which, according to the first three gospels, fear and trembling overwhelm the soul of the Redeemer, the fourth gospel assumes for him a thoroughly self-possessed and imperturbable attitude: ‘Let not your heart be troubled, trust in God, trust in me,’³ he exclaims to his disciples. He is full of perfect confidence, of blessed peace; a sense of victorious power pervades him. ‘Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you; let not

¹ John xiii. 33.

² John xiii. 36.

³ John xiv. 1.

your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid ;¹ such is here the expression of his state of mind. So little does he himself need to be comforted, that out of the very fullness of his joyous confidence he comforts his disciples. The prince of this world has no further power against him ;² death and its horrors are already overcome ; his last path to death has but the purpose of convincing the world that he loves the Father and obeys his commandments.³ According to this gospel, only the disciples are sad,⁴ not the Master. He calls to them from that depth of peace which no wave of disquiet could disturb,—‘ Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.’⁵ The last hour before his arrest is here not the hour of his agony, but the hour of his glorification.⁶ Hardly does he reach the spot where Judas had agreed with the band to seize Jesus, when he comes upon the traitor and the armed men led by him. At the very first word by which Jesus makes himself known, the men fall to the ground as if struck by lightning. There arises not the slightest doubt in his mind as to the drinking of the cup which his Father had given him.⁷ With the all-penetrating eye of Omniscience he ever saw beforehand what was to befall him. Nothing came to him unexpectedly ; there was at no moment any surprise ; he had long ago seen his approaching end and acquiesced in it ; he had considered and arranged everything. Going, in the full assurance of victory, to meet death, how could he be sad, tremble, and be dismayed ?

2. Yet the representation given by the fourth gospel of the last hours of Jesus before his arrest contains a deep truth. It shows us Jesus at the height and in the splendour of his moral completeness. But how he rose to this height,—on this point we are left in the dark. The portrait of the Redeemer is here painted complete in its finest lineaments. The eternal personal self-revelation of God stands before us in the glorified human form. All shadows which the weakness of human nature might cast are effaced from the picture. Such was Jesus in the hours of his exaltation, in the moments of clearest perception and most elevated self-possession. But such he was not in the hours and moments of his severest conflict, in the fire of temptation. Such a

¹ John xiv. 27.² John xiv. 30.³ John xiv. 31.⁴ John xvi. 22.⁵ John xvi. 33.⁶ John xvii. 1.⁷ John xviii. 11.

conflict, such a temptation had still to be met before the final victory on the cross. The holy combatant was not to be spared this last test. The first three gospels have described this with a frankness and vividness which allow not a doubt to be entertained of the historical truth of the picture. The Evangelists certainly had no occasion to invent spiritual conflicts for Jesus; there were weighty reasons why the later tradition should be led to avoid the mention of such as had actually taken place. But that they have not been omitted in the evangelical narrative is due to the fact that they were authenticated by the direct testimony of the apostles.

Having entered the garden of Gethsemane, Jesus felt the deep need of prayer and of being alone with the most intimate of his disciples. The mental anguish which took hold of him he has himself most strongly expressed in the words, 'My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even *unto death*.'¹ Already the third Evangelist, who also follows a later tradition, finds offence in these words and suppresses them.² Even to him such agony of soul seems irreconcilable with the exalted calmness and serenity which Jesus had just before shown when instituting the Lord's Supper. The traditionary view of the Church is at a loss how to explain the strong emotion evinced by Jesus in the garden. How indeed could the bearer of the Divine nature, the equal of God, the second person of the Godhead on earth, fear and tremble in view of death, which could have no power over the Godhead? But also from a human point of view, the question arises, whether such agony as Jesus suffered in Gethsemane be in accord with his lofty character; whether, at that critical moment, he did not evince a weakness, a wavering, although transient, not worthy of him? In answering this question, all depends upon discovering the true cause of this extreme emotion.

The nearer the final and decisive hour approached, the more profoundly he felt his lonely and deserted condition. He whose heart beat so warmly with inexhaustible *love*, was now to drink the bitterest cup of human *hatred*. And when do we feel ourselves so lonely and forsaken as when hatred is threatening to destroy us? Thus we are able to understand the request of Jesus to his most intimate disciples, who,

¹ Mark xiv. 34; Matt. xxvi. 38.

² Compare Luke xxii. 40, *et seq.*

though weak in faith were not without love for him ; ‘ Tarry ye here and watch with me.’¹ This truly historical circumstance is effaced in the third gospel by Jesus withdrawing from his disciples, who sleep instead of watching, so that he returns to them only at the close of his conflict to reproach them for their drowsiness.² The clear vision of having now to bear the extreme consequences of human hatred, annihilating him in the eyes of the world, of having to die covered with contempt and shame as a sacrifice of this hatred, moved his soul to its inmost depths, and now he wrestled with himself and with his God and Father. He cast himself in fearful agony upon the ground, praying repeatedly and with fervour, and the purport of his prayer was no other than that ‘ this cup ’ might, if possible, pass from him. What did he mean by ‘ this cup ? ’ Unquestionably, the violent suffering and death that awaited him. It was not the sin of his countrymen and of mankind, bringing death to him, the innocent and the pure ; it was not the infinite guilt, which, according to the traditionary view, he had to expiate by his suffering and dying ; it was not the immeasurable punishment which, according to the same view, he was to bear and experience in his death-offering,—it was nothing of this kind that filled his soul with anguish. There is not the slightest hint of all this in the evangelical narrative. What oppressed and agonized him was the forefeeling of the pangs and horrors that awaited him. An emotion purely human, a dread perfectly natural shook his whole being. His soul quivered and quaked with horror at the sufferings of death then at hand, at the manner of death, so terrible and so shameful that no worse could be imagined. It was not merely the *physical* suffering that was the source of his anguish, not death as such,—but to be condemned as a vile criminal by the highest spiritual and civil authorities ; to die the death of a miserable slave ; to be pierced with the arrows of *hate*, amidst the cowardly cries of his disciples fleeing from the scene of his suffering and his shame, amidst the devilish jeers of his triumphant foes : hence his agony, and hence his transient wish—*not to die*.

Not for a single instant had Jesus any doubt in regard to the great work of his life ; his consciousness of pure aims, of unwearied endeavours and faithful concern for the welfare

¹ Mark xiv. 34 ; Matt. xxvi. 38.

² Luke xxii. 46.

of mankind continued ever steadfast. His kingdom was founded,—a kingdom of spiritual glory and moral freedom. But might there not, for a moment, come to him the thought whether so dreadful a death were absolutely necessary to the building up, confirming, and extending of this kingdom? He might yet perhaps escape the deadly blow. Why then should he not? God *could* save him; He is Almighty, to him all things are possible.¹ Before him, therefore, he prostrated himself humbly and submissively in his agony, he submitted to the Almighty will with sincere obedience in that most trying hour, not hiding from his Heavenly Father the wish that his work might be carried to its completion without the sacrifice of his life.

3. The prayer of Jesus to the Heavenly Father, that the cup of death might pass away from him, if it seemed good to the Divine wisdom, is attested by the first three Evangelists.² What light it sheds upon the character of Jesus! His suffering and death he had foreseen and foretold at an early period, but not in a supernatural way, not with indubitable certainty, as appears from this prayer. How could he have been uncertain if he had the clearness of supernatural inspiration? How could he have wavered, and expressed the wish, not without hope of its fulfillment, that his Heavenly Father might preserve his life? He had foreseen and foretold his suffering and dying as an inevitable necessity, under the then existing circumstances, for the fulfillment of his calling. He had seen, on the one hand, that the theocratic party would not be satisfied, nor would rest till it had destroyed him. On the other hand, he had early and clearly perceived that his death, laden with the curse of the law and the shame of dishonour, must become the end of the dominion of the statute over the conscience, and that this dominion must cease as soon as Israel and the nations should appreciate his death, as the death of the righteous One who died for truth, freedom, and the salvation of the world. This vision and perception was dimmed for a moment, else the doubt never would have arisen in his soul, whether the same end might not be attained without his death; the wish could never have been uttered that the cup of death might pass away from him. Not sinful, but human, were the

¹ Mark xiv. 36,

² Mark xiv. 36; Matt. xxvi. 39; Luke xxii. 42.

doubt and the wish. They arose, though transiently, from a limited insight into the unlimited depth of the Divine counsels, and into the germ of the world's spiritual development. And the doubt and the wish could not have arisen at all, if Jesus had not had the conviction that his death was not absolutely necessary for the redemption and reconciliation of the world, and that his life-work was complete, full of power unto salvation, even without that violent and terrible ending on the cross.

But even in this transient wavering, the character of Jesus remains a model of submission and patience, of child-like deference to the will of the Heavenly Father. 'Not *what* I will, but *what* thou wilt,'¹ he prays; less strikingly, according to the first gospel: 'Not *as* I will, but *as* thou;'² an expression of the unconditional surrender of his will to the perfect counsels of the Divine will, an evidence of holy rest in the inmost depths of his soul amidst the storm that agitated it. Once more had the tempter approached him. Once more had the natural instinct of self-preservation sought to gain the ascendancy over the Divine instinct of love. Once more would flesh and blood assert themselves where the whole being was needed for accomplishing the highest spiritual aims.

For a moment the soul of Jesus was troubled; but soon the Spirit from above overcame the temptation from below, even in the severest assault, and Jesus stood the last test triumphantly. The later tradition was not satisfied with the unadorned simplicity of the earlier narrative. Its amplification affords an instructive glimpse into the formation of many a marvellous narrative. An angel must there come in to strengthen him,³ who had found his sole strength in submission and obedience to the will of God. His sweat is reported to have poured from him during his conflict as drops of blood; an evident exaggeration, by which credulous critics have been led into extraordinary and unworthy conjectures.⁴ The later tradition arbitrarily omitted several historical traits which set the purely human character of the occurrence in a strong light. How significant for the character of the Redeemer are the words with which, in that moment of profound mental suffering, he excuses his dis-

¹ Mark xiv. 36.² Matt. xxvi. 39.³ Luke xxii. 43.⁴ Luke xxii. 44.

ciples for not watching and praying! 'The spirit is willing, but the flesh weak.'¹ This saying, probably a popular proverb, does not agree with the traditionary opinion of the radical depravity of the human spirit through hereditary sin; but, nevertheless, it gives the judgment of Jesus concerning the moral condition of the human heart. And how gentle these words sound at a moment when one would have expected a tone of the greatest severity. Jesus had found men in general thus willing to do good, but without moral energy to perform—without force of mind, and without firmness of character. Sensuous weakness, irresolute good-nature, well-disposed half-heartedness,—such is the average character of mankind. The leaders of the hierarchical party, the men of tradition, the bearers of official power formed, however, an exception to this. *Their will was evil.* They were the obdurate servants of the letter and the form, with which they traded to their own advantage—tools of ambition and pride,—such had they become through the fanatical pursuit of party ends. These men Jesus justly denounced, calling them a brood of serpents. But they had not thus come into the world, they were not always so; they had become what they were by the habitual suppression of conscience, by the deadening influence of the spirit of caste, by the stupefying force of custom, by prejudice and selfishness, by self-love and self-will, which rendered them incapable of receiving light from others. Mere sensuous weakness leaves the heart still open and susceptible to truth and goodness, but from it may gradually spring the strength of passion and the cunning of malice.

How far had the disciples already strayed in consequence of their weakness! How self-confident they were, and how little worthy of confidence had they just shown themselves! One was contemplating the basest treachery; others of them—even the three in whom Jesus most confided—appeared halting and lukewarm, while the heart of their Master shook with the deepest anguish. The *flesh*, sensuous sloth and love of ease, the hankering after outward prosperity and comfort, is, though often unregarded, and even fostered by parents and educators, the primal source of the sins and vices of men. The flesh had never shown itself in the disciples, as the root of evil-doing, more plainly than at this moment. Sensuous

¹ Mark xiv. 38; Matt. xxvi. 41.

weakness and self-seeking prevented them from carrying out their good intentions, from fulfilling the duty of faithfulness to their Master. The life of the Old Testament institution had degenerated into sensuous forms. In sensuous excesses the heathen world had squandered its inheritance, and lost sight of its original communion with the living God. This dark power from below now threatened to extinguish the moral courage and spiritual strength of the disciples, just at the hour when they stood in special need of the light and fire of the Spirit from above. Out of the natural weakness of the flesh had also arisen the storms which so deeply disturbed the soul of Jesus.

4. But, in the very moment that the traitor with his companions entered the garden, those storms in the soul of Jesus were allayed. Firm and self-possessed, he went to meet the armed men who had come to seize him, but want of composure and presence of mind was shown by the disciples, whom the sudden danger took by surprise. One of them—Simon Peter, according to the later tradition¹—undertook, with a drawn sword, to defend Jesus against this midnight surprise, and wounded a servant of the law on the ear, which, according to the later legend, was immediately healed by Jesus.² According to the earlier tradition, Jesus seems scarcely to have been aware of this foolish and useless act of his disciple.³ In the confusion and darkness of the night, the blow given with the sword and its consequences probably escaped his notice; and surely there would have been no time for a conversation as recorded between him and his disciple.⁴ The falling to the earth, also, of the men who came to take Jesus, is mentioned only in the fourth gospel. No satisfactory purpose that the fall answered is shown; as those who fell were instantly on their feet again, and the seizure of Jesus was effected without hindrance.⁵ On the other hand, the words spoken by Jesus to the servants of the law and their leaders, at the moment of his arrest, are attested by all the first three Evangelists. These reproachful words, ‘You have come out as against a thief with swords and staves to take me, I was daily with you in the temple teaching, and you took me not,’⁶ are fitted far less to a number of

¹ John xviii. 10.

² Luke xxii. 51.

³ Mark xiv. 47.

⁴ Matt. xxvi. 52.

⁵ John xviii. 6.

⁶ Mark xiv. 48; Matt. xxvi. 55; Luke xxii. 52.

soldiers who had been thrown to the ground by a word of power, than to servants of the law engaged in an unobstructed execution of the orders which they had received from the authorities. That Jesus should have used such a word of power, at which, as the fourth Evangelist states, the men were struck down, though but for a moment, would certainly not agree with his remarking all had happened that the Scripture might be fulfilled.¹ This remark, in particular, shows that Jesus quietly acquiesced in his now swiftly approaching fate, regarding it as the realization of a Divine counsel determined upon from eternity; not doubting that the promise of future glory made to the suffering righteous one in the Old Testament would be fulfilled in his fate likewise. He submits calmly, therefore, to the sufferings which were to lead him to future victory and eternal joy.

This way of regarding his sufferings does not, however, lessen the guilt of the enemies of Jesus, nor extenuate the violence which, under protection of the law, they used against him. He had ground for the gravest complaint. Above all, he protested against the artifice practised against him, which was the more unjustifiable as it was openly and without reserve that he had always expressed his convictions. Up to this moment they had done nothing officially to check his public career. They had watched his steps, laid snares for him, but had never once attempted even to refute him. Now, from want of grounds for proceeding against him, they resorted to force, and when the moment seemed favourable, they carried out their designs against his life under the cover of night.

A fact accomplished always exercises a depressing influence upon weak minds. After the arrest of Jesus a panic seized his disciples. They all took to flight,² a circumstance which the fourth gospel, owing to its peculiar point of view, does not acknowledge,³ and which the third, out of consideration for the apostles, passes over in silence.⁴ The disciples had claimed for themselves a braver faith than they possessed. The sight of their master seized and taken away by the servants of authority, a picture of the extremest human impotency and of heart-rending misery, filled them in their first surprise with terror and dismay. For the moment they gave up his cause and their own for lost.

¹ Mark xiv. 49; Matt. xxvi. 56.

² John xviii. 8.

³ Mark xiv. 50; Matt. xxvi. 56.

⁴ Luke xxii. 53.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE TRIAL.

1. A COMMITTEE of the High Council, composed of persons to be entirely relied upon, were already assembled in nightly session, Caiaphas presiding, and witnesses also had been summoned in all haste. Jesus was to be speedily examined, the case brought to a conclusion with all possible despatch, and the sentence, no doubt that of death, executed at once.¹ Only Judaic witnesses appear to have been called; the earlier part of the career of Jesus, that in Galilee, comparatively quieter than the later period, was not brought under notice. It is remarkable that entire unanimity, such as the law required,² could not be obtained from the witnesses. They evidently were not bribed, for had they been, the desired unanimity would have been secured. Several of them, however, appear to have agreed in stating that Jesus had publicly declared that he would 'destroy the temple made with hands, and within three days build another made without hands.'³ Why the Evangelists pronounce this testimony false is not easy to see, as Jesus had undoubtedly used very nearly these words. It can only have been the construction which both witnesses and judges put upon them that was false. Jesus had not, as the fourth gospel supposes, spoken symbolically, and meant by the temple to be destroyed and to be built again, his own body crucified and risen,⁴ but he had spoken in reference to the Herodian temple as the centre of the Old Testament theocracy. With regard to this, he, in the consciousness of his Messianic authority, intended to say that he would speedily put an end to it, and establish in its place a new temple, the community of believers, built up by the Word and Spirit of God. What he said about rebuilding the temple in the

¹ Mark xiv. 55; Matt. xxvi. 59.² Mark xiv. 58; Matt. xxvi. 61.² Deut. xvii. 6; xix. 15.⁴ John ii. 19. See page 229.

space of a few days was understood by one and another of his hearers literally, and as a vainglorious assertion that he would destroy the Herodian temple, and in three days, as with a magician's wand, erect a far more splendid temple in its place. Had he made any such pretensions he would have confessed himself, not only a fanatical destroyer of the sanctuary, but a boaster vaunting the possession of Omnipotence. The witnesses, however, do not appear to have agreed as to their understanding of the words. One took them literally, another saw something of their true meaning. Jesus spoke these words, according to the entirely credible account in the fourth gospel, upon the occasion of the purifying of the temple. He had at that time publicly and irrevocably broken with the external forms of the theocracy, and doubtless explained, in connection with these words, what he understood by the true temple and the worship of God in spirit and in truth. Those words, rightly understood, were an open declaration of war against traditional Judaism and its guardians, the hierarchical party. He who foretold, as the necessary consequence of his teaching and working, the destruction of the visible temple, with which all the memories and hopes of pious Israelites were associated; he who promised to build up in its place into an invisible temple the great body of the people who, under the Old Covenant, were the wards of the guardians of the external temple service—placed himself in the sharpest contrast to the time-honoured traditions of Judaism and to all its sacred statutes and usages, and thus summoned boldly and peremptorily the spiritual authorities to the protection and vindication of their alleged sanctities, which were thereby threatened. If, however, the presiding officer of the council were not fully satisfied by the testimony of the witnesses, the reason for this was that, in the declaration of Jesus concerning the approaching destruction of the temple, there lay no sufficient assertion of the position and dignity to which Jesus had laid claim. It was necessary that the members of the High Council conducting the examination should ascertain whether Jesus really demanded to be acknowledged as the Messiah. He had declared himself as such, for the most part, only among his intimate friends, and towards the close of his public career. Whether he would now, in the presence of the supreme spiritual authorities of Israel, proclaim him-

self the Messiah, was the question. To have this stated plainly was what his judges desired. If such a claim should be avowed by him, then it would be proved that he was dangerous to the State, as well as a fanatic in religion, and the Roman authority in Jerusalem would have just as great an interest in condemning him to death as the Jewish spiritual court. The presiding High Priest was resolved to bring the matter to a speedy end. He demanded of Jesus a direct answer to a plain question; he asked him whether he regarded himself as the Messiah, the son of the Blessed.¹ That this question was first put amid a storm of excitement, at a sitting of the whole of the High Council held the following morning, as the third gospel reports,² is unlikely. The preliminary hearing in the night had the very purpose of forcing from Jesus the necessary confessions, which might be laid before the public meeting of the High Council on the morrow.

Certainly Jesus dared not be silent upon the question of the High Priest. He had held his peace when conflicting witnesses were putting a false construction upon what he had said; for to prove that he had been misunderstood would have led too far, and his irreconcilable opposition to the theocracy—the real substance of the testimony—would, at all events, have to be admitted. To have declined answering the High Priest would have been equivalent to a denial of his Messiahship. There came therefore from him the decisive, ‘I am the Messiah,’ and the remark that his judges ‘would yet see him at the right hand of power, and coming with the clouds of heaven.’³ These last words are evidently not to be understood literally. Jesus here expresses most distinctly his conviction that the kingship belongs to him, the future to his kingdom; that he is the true King of the spirit and of the truth, not only over Israel, but over all mankind; and that his enemies, who are now triumphing over him for the moment, will yet be obliged to bow before his royal power.

The party in the High Council hostile to Jesus had now gained their end. The horror shown by the presiding High Priest at the declaration of Jesus was not altogether feigned. That declaration, from the theocratic point of view which the High Priest, as head of the spiritual council, officially re-

¹ Mark xiv. 61; Matt. xxvi. 63.

² Luke xxii. 66.

³ Mark xiv. 62; Matt. xxvi. 64.

presented—might easily be construed into a contempt for the sacred ordinances and statutes of Judaism. Before the highest spiritual dignitaries of Israel, the guardians of the venerable legal institution, a man claimed to be *King of Israel*—a man without crown or sceptre, without army or might, with only a little company of followers from the humbler classes of the people. Did not this look like contempt cast upon the present and the future of Israel? Was it not blaspheming the God of Israel, whose son the accused claimed to be? What need was there to hear any more witnesses? He had convicted himself. He had blasphemed. He had incurred the penalty of death according to the ancient law, although it had now for some time been mitigated in practice.¹ As a sign of the greatness of the crime, the presiding priest rent his garments, and a wild cry of horror filled the hall in which the judges had met for the preliminary hearing. He was considered guilty—his fate was decided. Hence the shameful and brutal manner in which the servants of the court treated him after the breaking-up of the sitting till the dawn of day.²

2. In the meanwhile an incident occurred in the court of the building where the High Council was assembled, which forms a most striking contrast to the fearless confession made by Jesus in the presence of those high dignitaries. Simon Peter, sincerely sympathizing with the Master in his fate, and having recovered somewhat from his first fright, had followed him into the court of the hall. But he had not yet regained his self-possession. When a maid-servant recognized in him an adherent of Jesus, his courage instantly failed; he straightway denied this connection, and when others also made the same charge against him, he tried, even with an oath, to clear himself from the suspicion of being a friend of Jesus.³ What a contrast between the open fearless confession of Jesus in the face of inevitable death, and the weak cowardly denial of his disciple, intent only on saving himself, though a little while before so loud in his protestations of fidelity! There, in the moment of the greatest danger, the most exalted strength of character; here, the most shameful weakness. Solely upon the inex-

¹ Levit. xxiv. 16.

² Mark xiv. 65; Matt. xxvi. 67.

³ Mark xiv. 66; Matt. xxvi. 69; Luke xxii. 56, who is the least accurate.

haustible fullness of *his own* spiritual power, upon *his own* strength of character, Jesus had to rely; for the instruments he had chosen had proved up to this moment, and even in the critical hour, utterly inadequate.

Jesus was happily spared the pain of witnessing the shame of Peter. That at the second cock-crowing he turned a reproachful look upon Peter is added by the later tradition.¹ Jesus was not in the court of the building during the denial of Peter, but was being examined and guarded within, and all communication between him and his disciples was cut off. His condemnation was decided, although only in a form to be acted upon by the full council, who were called together during the night. At daybreak the public sitting was held. The result of the hearing in the night was laid before them; the assembly, in conformity with the proposal and motion of the president, Caiaphas, was soon unanimous in condemning to death the 'blasphemer' and 'destroyer of the statutes of the fathers.' Jesus, as a condemned criminal of the worst description, was bound and handed over to the Roman Procurator, without whose confirmation the sentence of death could not be executed.² The first three gospels agree in the following points:—on the evening of the 14th of Nisan, the arrest; in the night of the 14th–15th, the preliminary hearing before a committee of the High Council; and on the morning of the 15th, a full public meeting of the council, and the formal sentence of death, upon the ground ascertained in the previous examination. But the account of the fourth gospel is not clear. In this gospel mention is made of an examination before the father-in-law of Caiaphas, the High Priest Annas, which led to no conclusion, and in which Jesus is stated to have returned only an evasive answer to a question put to him respecting his disciples and his teaching. When Jesus, in answer to Annas, bade him seek the information he desired among those who had heard him, it is said that this remark drew down upon Jesus very rough bodily ill-treatment, whereupon he is led away bound to Caiaphas, and the hearing before Annas is abruptly broken off.³ Of a second hearing before Caiaphas the fourth gospel says nothing.⁴ It is of special importance to this Evangelist that Jesus makes

¹ Luke xxii. 61.

² John xviii. 13–22.

³ Mark xv. 1; Matt. xxvii. 1; Luke xxiii. 1.

⁴ John xviii. 28.

the decisive confession, not before the Jewish High Council, but before the Roman Procurator. This seems to be the reason why he represents Jesus as having passed the night before his final condemnation in the dwelling of Annas, who was not at that time clothed with official authority, and as having been taken in the morning to Pilate without any further proceedings before Caiaphas, the president of the High Council. But how much more likely is it that Jesus underwent in the night a preliminary examination before a committee of the council, and that his formal condemnation followed in the morning at a full meeting of the spiritual authorities!¹

3. The result of the examination held in the night was doubtless officially communicated to the Procurator, Pontius Pilate. That such a communication had been made is implied in Pilate's question—expressive at the same time of his contempt of Judaism—‘Art thou the king of the Jews?’ *i.e.*, the would-be Messiah.² Here is apparent the particular ground upon which the High Council had condemned Jesus. They had pronounced him deserving of death, under the pretence that he had been acting the part of the Jewish Messiah. The fourth gospel gives the account differently. It states that Pilate had to enquire of the ‘Jews’ the ground of complaint;³ a statement evidently resting upon the erroneous supposition that there had been no decisive examination of Jesus in the night, no sentence of death passed by the High Council in the morning, the confirmation of which only was asked of Pilate. If, according to the first and second Evangelists, Jesus returned an affirmative answer only to Pilate's first question, whether he considered himself the Messiah,⁴ and then allowed all further questions to go unanswered, the reason of this silence is to be found in the fact that he could not suppose the Roman magistrate and man of the world to have the slightest understanding and appreciation of his cause. According to the fourth gospel, on the contrary, Jesus does not by any means remain silent when questioned by Pilate, but enters into an important and deep conversation, in which he describes to the Roman Procurator the super-worldly nature of his kingdom and the moral glory

¹ See Appendix, III. 30.

² John xviii. 29.

³ Mark xv. 2; Matt. xxvii. 11; Luke xxiii. 3.

⁴ Mark xv. 5; Matt. xxvii. 14.

of his kingship.¹ The language ascribed to Jesus is unquestionably worthy of him, and very probably was uttered by him on some other occasion and in another connection. But he could not have spoken on this occasion in the way the fourth gospel relates, according to the manifestly trustworthy reports of the first three gospels, and considering the personal and official position of the Procurator to him. There is no reason whatever for disbelieving the express assertion of the first three Evangelists, namely, that Jesus gave Pilate *no further answer*.²

In this silence there was the mute eloquence of a man whose cause needed no longer an advocate before his spiritual and temporal judges. In these courts his case was closed; the ecclesiastical statute and the civil law condemned him; according to the strict Jewish law he was an evil-doer, and in the eye of the Roman law an inciter and seducer of the people. He could have freed himself from the suspicion of being dangerous to the State only by being utterly false to himself and to his cause, by retracting the free and joyful confession of his Messiahship which he had made before the High Priest. Pilate would, perhaps not unwillingly, have saved him. According to Josephus,³ he was neither bloodthirsty nor cruel. When the military standards bearing the image of the Emperor gave offence to the Jews in the City of the Temple, he removed them at their request. He did not readily expose himself without necessity to the suspicion of cruel severity. He had probably heard of Jesus before, who had been represented to him as a man politically harmless. The hatred to Jesus manifested by the hierarchy was in itself no reason for Pilate, why Jesus should be condemned to death, for the hierarchy was by no means well-disposed towards Roman world-dominion. Most likely he saw in Jesus a religious enthusiast who might disturb the public peace; but a seditious individual just imprisoned appeared to him more dangerous. Hence his attempt to persuade the people to ask the release of Jesus upon the occasion of the Passover, they having the privilege, according to an established custom, of obtaining the release

¹ John xviii. 34.

² Mark xv. 5; Matt. xxvii. 14; Luke also (xxiii. 2) knows nothing of any further reply made by Jesus to Pilate.

³ Josephus, Ant. xviii. 3. 1; 4. 1.

of a state-prisoner at that feast—an attempt which led the hierarchical party to make counter attempts on behalf of Barabbas. The steps Pilate took in favour of Jesus could not have been very earnestly meant; as a man of the world he, from his point of view, despised Jesus, the man of the people, and with scorn upon his lips he ratified the sentence of death pronounced by the High Council.¹ How little he thought of treating the condemned man with mercy is shown in his consenting to deliver him over to the cruel and ignominious punishment of crucifixion.

While the High Council was importuning Pilate to ratify the sentence of death, Jesus maintained perfect composure. He made not the slightest attempt to beg or purchase his life of the magistrate. Whether by referring the case to the tribunal of Herod Antipas, Pilate really sought to withdraw himself from the affair is doubtful. This episode is mentioned only by the third Evangelist, and does not agree well with the jealousy with which the Roman authorities regarded Jewish princes.² But tradition in the third gospel preserves also the idea that Jesus made not the slightest sacrifice of the dignity of his character before his judges, and that to the inquisitive questions put to him he answered only with an impressive silence.³

If the fourth gospel places the character of Jesus in a different light—if he is there represented as most ready to speak to Pilate, referring the Procurator from his earthly judgment-seat to the supreme source of all power and authority, and, moreover, as finding excuse for Pilate in comparison with the hierarchical party,⁴ it is because it was the evident aim of this gospel to make Pilate, as the representative of the Gentile state-power, appear in a favourable light compared with the representatives of the Jewish spiritual authorities, the authors of the death-sentence.

4. In other respects also, the conduct of Pilate, according to the representation of the fourth gospel, is not free from peculiarities. While, according to the first two Evangelists, he made *one* attempt, and according to the third Evangelist, *two* attempts, he made, according to the fourth, *four* attempts to persuade the people to show mercy to Jesus. According

¹ Mark xv. 12; Matt. xxvii. 22.

² Luke xxiii. 7 *et seq.*, and Appendix, III. 31.

³ Luke xxiii. 9.

⁴ John xix. 11.

to this gospel, Pilate first tried to induce the Jewish judges to take the case into their hands, and judge it by their law, whereupon they reminded him what it was not creditable to a Roman official to need to be informed of, that the Roman law did not grant them liberty to execute a sentence of death.¹ He then endeavoured, by repeated assertions of the innocence of Jesus, to move the 'Jews' to ask the release of Jesus instead of Barabbas.² When this attempt proved unsuccessful, he further exerted himself to excite the compassion of the Jewish opponents of Jesus, and caused him to be most cruelly treated in order to awaken the pity of his foes,³ a proceeding that certainly evinces no very deep knowledge of the human heart. Finally, he tried to touch the chords of national patriotic feeling in the Jewish judges, by representing to them the disgrace which the public crucifixion of even a pretended Jewish king would be to their national dignity.⁴

It is the evident tendency of this representation, far more than that of the first three gospels, to throw the chief guilt of the execution of Jesus upon the Jews, and upon the hierarchical party in particular. But, in carrying out its purpose, this gospel places the character of Pilate in a very ambiguous and, historically considered, unintelligible light. That a high Roman officer of state should so emphatically proclaim the innocence of a man condemned to death; that he, in whose power it was, by a simple veto of the sentence, to save the prisoner and protect the right, should make so many fruitless efforts to induce the inferior judges to reverse their decision; that, finally, against his better knowledge and against his conscience, he should ratify the judgment of a subordinate court,—all this is certainly not very probable. It is only the oldest tradition (Mark's) which proves itself credible throughout in the account of Pilate's dealing with the case. Pilate saw through the party-spirit of the hierarchy;⁵ he would fain have saved Jesus, but without offence to the priests, without loss of popular favour. Since the purification of the temple, the adherents of Jesus had become intimidated. The fanatical party among the people belong-

¹ John xviii. 31.

² John xviii. 38.

³ John xix. 5.

⁴ John xix. 15.

⁵ Mark xv. 10. He saw that the hierarchy had delivered Jesus to him through 'envy.'

ing to the old school were embittered to the last degree, and Pilate, after the failure of his one attempt to save Jesus by trying to induce the people to ask for his liberation,¹ hesitated not a moment longer, but suffered himself to be a willing tool in the hands of the priests. The startling dream of the wife of Pilate,² and the scene of Pilate's washing his hands, in sign of throwing off from himself, notwithstanding his ratification of the death-sentence, all share in the guilt of putting the Righteous One to death,³ are additions made by the first Evangelist for the purpose of laying a heavier blame upon the hierarchy. As the later tradition has thus depicted the character of Pilate in colours too fair, so, on the other hand, the personal greatness of Jesus is let down from its purely historical height. According to the earliest tradition, Jesús answered Pilate's question, whether he were the Messiah, just as he answered the same question before the High Council, with a simple affirmative,⁴ and replied to no other question.

This silence before the heathen judge, who had neither a clear insight into the nature of the charge brought against Jesus, nor the disposition to enquire into it, was the most dignified course that Jesus could have chosen. It was as humble as it was self-possessed. He would neither justify nor excuse himself; and it is not likely that in order to lay a heavier guilt upon his hierarchical opposers, he would relieve a man of the world like Pilate of his share in the responsibility. At any rate Jesus' words,⁵ condemnatory especially of the Jewish judges, would be irreconcilable with the declaration that the authors of his death acted in ignorance.⁶ His silence was no dull indifference or defiant pride, but moral self-possession and calm dignity. No needless word, liable to be misconstrued and turned into ridicule, should in the last hours of his life escape his lips. In mute patience, in still submission, he bore his fearful fate as the inevitable consequence of the irreconcilable difference between the community of the Spirit, founded by him in truth, freedom, righteousness and love, and the community of the statute, founded by the hierarchy in external discipline, in compulsory forms, in blind subjection, in fiery fanaticism.

¹ Mark xv. 15. He was 'willing to content the people.'

² Matt. xxvii. 19.

³ Matt. xxvii. 24.

⁴ Mark xv. 5; Matt. xxvii. 14.

⁵ John xix. 11.

⁶ Luke xxxiii. 34.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE CRUCIFIXION.

1. AFTER the ratification of the sentence of death by Pilate, its execution was at once ordered by him to take place on the cross. It was conducted with all the unfeeling harshness and extreme barbarity with which heathen Rome was wont to treat its victims. Jesus was first of all given up to the mockery of the soldiers who had charge of him, and then happened what Pilate could not have allowed until he had found Jesus guilty, although the fourth gospel reports differently.¹ The cause of his condemnation—his claim to the royal dignity of the Messiah—gave his executioners the occasion for cruel ridicule. The whole guard stationed in the government building was called together, that they might give play to their savage love of wanton mischief upon the Jewish rebel and fanatic. With scornful derision royal honours were paid to his person. A soldier's cloak was thrown over him for a royal mantle. They plaited a crown of thorns and put it on his head, and bowed before him in mockery. They forced him to hold a reed in his hand for a sceptre, and then they snatched it from him and struck him with it, to make him feel the wretched condition to which he was reduced. They spat in his face, and vented upon him all the rude jests of a coarse soldier rabble. It is the *Jew* that they hate in him, the pretensions of *Judaism* to world-dominion that they cover with ridicule. These *Gentiles* had not the remotest idea that the *hatred of the Jews* had condemned him to the cross; that his unavoidable conflict against the Jewish dream of world-dominion had plunged him into this abyss of shame. What a contrast between the clear, calm vision of Jesus, comprehending within its range the future of the world's historical development, and the blindness of

¹ John xix. 1.

these tools of power, bent only upon the momentary gratification of their barbarian humour !

Those moments of derision and mockery were doubtless among the most torturing that Jesus had in his last hours to endure. No complaint fell from his lips. He might have spoken, entreated, implored the soldiers to have pity on him ; he might have appealed to their human feeling and their sense of honour ; for does there not beat even in the rudest breast a human heart ! But he opened not his mouth. This imperturbable silence does not indicate a sinking under the overwhelming sorrows heaped upon his head. He feared and trembled in Gethsemane, but now he is perfect master over his agony. This silence was but a proof of his holy child-like submission to the will of his Heavenly Father. He *suffered for the work of his life in accordance with the counsels of God*, and in holy love to his country and to mankind. No man understood him at this moment. His royal spirit was veiled in suffering and contumely, but he was none the less conscious of his eternal worth, and ever clearer stood before his eye the purpose of his death—to abolish the dead and death-working statute which had decreed his death as a satisfaction to the Divine justice, and to teach the world that the righteousness of God can only be satisfied by the sacrifice of love. His executioners led him, ridiculed and derided, to the place of execution upon a hill *outside* the city.¹ The comparatively long distance which he had to go increased his suffering. According to the fourth gospel he had to carry his cross himself.² The statement of the older gospels is however more probable, that, though against the common practice, Simon of Cyrene, coming out of the country, accidentally passing by, was made to carry it.³ The probably delicate organization of Jesus, the extreme mental emotions, the exhausting excitement, the ill-treatment of the last hours, and the savage uproar around him, all rendered it impossible for him to drag along the burden of the cross.

2. That Jesus, on the way to the place of execution, broke the silence which he had preserved till then, Luke alone informs us, following in this a particular and authentic tradition. To his judges, after he had declared himself the

¹ Mark xv. 20 ; Matt. xxvii. 32 ; Luke xxiii. 33 ; John xix. 17.

² John xix. 17.

³ Mark xv. 21 ; Matt. xxvii. 32 ; Luke xxiii. 26.

Messiah, upon which declaration his condemnation had followed, he had *nothing more* to say. No murmur of pain, no outcry of indignation, should betray his inmost emotion. Towards them his position was to bear patiently the utmost severity of legal violence, as the consequence of the work of his life: the deliverance of the human spirit from the yoke of tradition, and from the chains of sin. But those lips, that had been closed for hours, were opened again when, on the way to execution, he saw so many accompanying him, full of sympathy—Jewish women especially, who were giving vent to their sorrow in tears and lamentations.¹ Touched at the sight, Jesus was led to address to these women a word of double exhortation. He called to them, and bade them not weep for him. There was no cause for commiseration; he had to die in the bloom of life, in the most faithful performance of the work which God had committed to him; his death was the necessary consequence of his life-work, and his apparent destruction was his real victory. He could be an object of pity only if he did not complete his work by such a death—only if, from fear of the horrors of death, he should prefer a broken life to death. Rather were they to weep for themselves and for their children. The overwhelming flood of his own agonies does not make him forgetful of the woes impending over the city of Jerusalem, whose doom, he well knew, was sealed. And how much more to be pitied was the fate which would fall upon Jerusalem and her population than his! He compares himself to the green tree.² In him is fresh, sound, imperishable life, and the blood flowing from his cross will soon change into a stream of living water for the world. But Jerusalem, with the hierarchy and the deluded people chained to its fate, is dry wood; Israel a trunk without foliage, bearing fruit no more. From the destruction and desolation of the city of Zion, from the stream of blood which its walls would drink in, from the sufferings of all kinds which would befall its inhabitants, and especially the more helpless—the women and children—there could spring no fountain of life for the world.

A terrible judgment, in every way deserved, would fall upon the City of the Temple laden with the curse of centuries of wrong, hypocrisy, and selfishness, upon its watch-

¹ Luke xxiii. 27.

² Luke xxiii. 31.

men and its shepherds. When Jerusalem falls, the old worn-out letter would not be judged in the death of the righteous, but, after long forbearance, God's eternal judgment visits the unrighteous.

With such words did Jesus break his long deep silence, not to lament the woe which had broken in upon himself, but to deplore the sufferings of others, the terrible calamities that would plunge into the depths of despair his unbelieving and obdurate countrymen, and the city upon whose soil the place of his execution was now prepared. The words which he uttered were words of holy love, of pity gushing from the depths of this love. He had always regarded children with such tender interest; their loving eyes had greeted him when he took them to his bosom, and promised them a part in the kingdom of God; from them, as the rising better generation, he had hoped a better future; but now he pronounced those happy who had never borne a child. When a nation no longer has strength to extricate itself from dead traditions; when it contemns the spirit of reform, repels the hand that offers it life, freedom, salvation; when it murders its prophets, and rends in pieces its deliverers—then it has no longer any future, and a new generation arising from such no one can desire. In such a case a grave is all that can be desired for it, and the despair is justified which calls upon the mountains, 'Fall on us!' and upon the hills, 'Cover us!'¹

3. Jesus, upon reaching the place of execution, was immediately nailed to the cross. According to custom, there was offered him an intoxicating drink,² by which the torture of crucifixion would in some degree be mitigated. Tradition went early astray, even in the first gospel, in representing Jesus as refusing to take the 'wine' mixed with gall, because of its nauseous character.³ The Evangelist was led into this error by a passage in the Psalms which seemed to him typical of the last hours of Jesus.⁴ The drink was offered not as an additional torture, but to alleviate suffering, and Jesus refused it, not that he might have one pang less to endure, but that he might meet the last moment with unclouded consciousness. To die in a stupor, artificially caused, would have ill-suited the sanctity of his character and the dignity of his

¹ Luke xxiii. 30.

² Matt. xxvii. 34.

³ According to Mark (xv. 23), wine of myrrh.

⁴ Ps. lxix. 22.

Messianic calling. But to hang naked upon the cross—for the soldiers, according to custom, had divided his clothes among themselves—with a malefactor crucified on either side of him, was surely an aggravation of these hours of torture, a barbarous laceration of his sensibility, and an intentional degradation of his personal honour to the level of a common criminal; at the same time it showed how little in earnest Pilate was in his wish to treat Jesus with merciful consideration.

But through the most painful humiliations, through the severest tortures, the character of Jesus had to be tested as to its unparalleled purity and greatness. He proved most gloriously in the hours of crucifixion his humility, his love, his tenderness, his fortitude, the godlike nobleness of a soul made perfect in suffering. Silent before his judges, now he spoke. Few but golden are the words which tradition has handed down, stamped with the seal of authenticity.

First he lifted up his voice and prayed for his murderers, 'Father, forgive them, they know not what they do'¹—words fully in harmony with the exaltedness of the Crucified One, overflowing with an unspeakable fullness of love, patience, submission, and goodwill towards men. Racked by the most acute pain caused in crucifixion by the nailing to the cross, covered with all the indignities which men can heap upon the vilest criminal, heartlessly forsaken and disowned by his bewildered friends and disciples, there comes no sigh from his lips, no cry, no bitter or despairing word, but a prayer to his Heavenly Father for the forgiveness of his murderers. These men he was persuaded had acted *under a delusion*. They were the tools of religious and political fanaticism. The members of the High Council who voted for his death doubtless believed that by his execution they were doing God an acceptable service. Their God was the God of statutes, who had made a curse-covenant with the Israelites,² who threatened with his curse everyone who did not obey all the words of the Law!³ There never once dawned upon them the remotest idea that they had delivered up to a shameful and cruel death him without whom the *law of God* would have remained a death-working formula, and the promise of the Old Testament an empty letter. Not-

¹ Luke xxiii. 34.

² Deut. xxix. 14.

³ Deut. xxvii. 26.

withstanding all the learning acquired in their schools, they were wrapped in blind ignorance. This ignorance certainly was not without blame, for Jesus had worked among them with power and earnestness to bring them to a better knowledge. Yet their guilt was pardonable, in so far as it was the mighty and magical influence of traditional usage consecrated by the customs of centuries that had blinded them. And when Jesus now implored the Heavenly Father to show the blessings of his grace to his murderers also, the prayer was but an outburst of the pitying love of which he had become the herald and the representative on earth, and a confirmation of his saying that he sought to be the Saviour, not of those who were whole, but of those who were sick.

Religious fanaticism and political hatred continued to persecute him even on the cross. A tablet, according to custom, was put above his head, upon which was inscribed his alleged crime. The words, 'the King of the Jews,'¹ were a severe satire upon the hierarchy, the Jewish national party, and its vain attempts after world-dominion. Thus the Roman authorities considered it not beneath their dignity to indulge a mocking spirit, even in an inscription over the cross. But under the cross also the Jews, themselves treated with contempt by Pilate, indulged in derision. The occurrence at the purification of the temple was still fresh in the remembrance of the idle crowd gathered under the cross, and the saying of Jesus was still in their minds, that he would destroy the old temple, and in three days build a new one.² When Jesus uttered this saying, no doubt many rejoiced in these words, so full of hope, and in the bold deed that accompanied them. Now they looked upon him as a vain boaster. So much had been said of his miracles, why did he not now work a miracle for his own deliverance? He had helped so many, why did he not now save himself? Now, some cried out, let him work a real miracle, descend from the cross, and deliver himself from his torments.³ What miserable testimony did they give of their religious and moral insight when they declared, that if they with their bodily eyes saw him descend by supernatural aid from the cross, they would

¹ Mark (xv. 26) has the original inscription. Compare Luke xxiii. 38; Matt. xxvii. 37; John xix. 19.

² Mark xv. 29; Matt. xxvii. 40.

³ Mark xv. 31; Matt. xxvii. 42; Luke xxiii. 35.

believe in him!¹ Their religion stood upon the foundation of the five senses. The invisible powers of that spirit in which Jesus taught and laboured, and founded his kingdom, had no existence for them. Only what can be seen with the eye and grasped with the hand was, for them, authority for faith. They wanted what Jesus did not want—the religion of miracles; the religion of truth and freedom which he desired they cared not for.

The criminals crucified with Jesus joined with the Jewish rabble² in deriding him, moved thereto partly perhaps by a bitter feeling because he would not work a miracle to deliver them as well as himself, and partly to find favour with the crowd in their last hours of torment—the poor comfort of savage natures. The later tradition throws over the dark scene a somewhat softening light, by the statement that only one of the criminals joined in the mockery; while it puts into the mouth of the other a rebuke of his fellow-sufferer, together with an earnest acknowledgment of the pure character of Jesus, and a desire to be admitted into his kingdom.³ The reply of Jesus, promising the penitent criminal immediate admission to Paradise, the dwelling-place of the righteous until the day of resurrection,⁴ fully accords, it is true, with the tenderness and goodwill which, according to the same Evangelist, Jesus had just manifested towards his murderers, and is entirely worthy of the character of Jesus. But the concordant statement of the first two Evangelists, that *both* the criminals reviled him, comes from the oldest and most authentic source. To the later, the Gentile-Christian tradition, the temptation was strong to carry, even into the immediate vicinity of the cross, the contrast between the believing and the unbelieving portion of mankind, and to represent one of the two thieves as the type of unbelieving obduracy, the other as the type of repentant conversion.

4. Jesus had refused the stupefying drink. With full consciousness, amidst increasing tortures, he confronted the last moment. After six hours of extreme suffering that moment came, earlier than usual in this manner of death; the Saviour of the World was not to be spared the pang of the death-struggle. There then broke from his oppressed heart the first and only expression of sadness uttered in

¹ Mark xv. 32.

² Luke xxiii. 42.

³ Mark xv. 32; Matt. xxv. 44.

⁴ Luke xxiii. 43.

these hours of suffering. It burst forth in words of the pious Old Testament sufferer, 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?'¹ words which sank ineffaceably into the memory of the persons standing around the cross, and were beyond all doubt so uttered by Jesus. If the later tradition omits these words,² it is because they were already beginning to give offence. They express a feeling so purely human, that they were not reconcilable with the later exaggerated ideas of the Divinity of the person of Jesus. They have also been variously misinterpreted and misunderstood. Certainly Jesus did not mean to convey the idea that in that moment when he uttered the words, he felt himself forsaken by God, that the consciousness of his communion with the Heavenly Father was really extinguished within him. It is a common experience that the dying, in the last struggle, recall to their failing memory words of consolation and inspiration. In this respect also Jesus shared in our weakness. The horror of the death-struggle, enveloping his soul in night, obscured for the moment his otherwise so clear consciousness of God, and he could express the momentary feeling only in the words of the Psalmist. That person was conscious of most intimate communion with God,³ but his *position* was so unutterably miserable, that it seemed to him as if God had forsaken him. Therefore his cry of distress is not, 'O God, why have *I* forsaken thee?' but, '*My* God, why hast *thou* forsaken me?' Such a sense of extreme loneliness certainly overpowered the soul of Jesus in his last moments, that he expressed himself as if he felt that the Heavenly Father had hidden his face from him, and left him to the overpowering burden of his agony. It was, however, only a shadow, as a cloud passing over the sun, dimming for an instant the light of the Divine love, and thereupon came the blessed end, and he expired with a loud cry. A pitying hand had just before wet his parched lips with a cooling sponge—an act of compassion in which scorn mingled its gall⁴—incomprehensible, if the human heart did not so often surprise us with its enigmas. The report of Luke, changing

¹ Mark xv. 34; Matt. xxvii. 46; Ps. xxii. 1.

² They are wanting in Luke xxiii. 44-46, and in the fourth gospel.

³ Ps. xxii. 11, 21.

⁴ Compare Mark xv. 36 with Matt. xxvii. 48, 49, already an attempt to solve the difficulty.

the outcry into a dying prayer,¹ is doubtless of a later origin.

5. According to the *first three* gospels, there were neither acquaintances, relatives, nor apostles present as witnesses of the last moments of Jesus. There were certain women from Galilee, whom the rumour of the issue of his labour in Judea and Jerusalem had drawn to the capital, who witnessed the terrible tragedy from a distance; the mother of Jesus was not among them.² Their deep and loving sympathy left these women no rest at home. But to witness the scene of suffering, close to the cross—to behold him helplessly languish under their very eyes, their revered friend, who had been always so forgetful of his earthly comforts, and to whom, on that account, they had been wont to minister³—was beyond their strength; his mother was unable to bear the sight, even from a distance.

According to the *fourth* gospel, the mother of Jesus, his mother's sister, and some female disciples are said to have passed those terrible hours with him under the cross.⁴ But it is against historical probability that the oldest tradition, originating from the very theatre of these last events, should make no mention of the presence of the women under the cross, which would have been so noteworthy an historical fact as to stamp itself on the memory; and it is also against natural feeling to think of the mother of Jesus and the other women as being, during his execution, in close proximity to the cross dripping with blood. The statement of the fourth gospel belongs to a later tradition, that had its origin at a time when the persons of whom it tells were no longer living. As, according to this gospel, the public life of Jesus commenced with an admonishing word to his mother, who had not then been converted by him,⁵ it was natural for the same Evangelist to represent Jesus as concluding his career with a tender word, and making provision for his mother.⁶ Her steadfast endurance under the cross appears, then, an all-sufficient atonement for her early indifference to the Gospel.

Two other utterances of Jesus on the cross, reported in

¹ Luke xxiii. 46; see Ps. xxxi. 6.

² Mark xv. 40; Matt. xxvii. 56; Luke xxiii. 49.

³ John xix. 25.

⁵ John ii. 4.

⁴ Mark xv. 41.

⁶ John xix. 26.

the fourth gospel, could hardly have been spoken by him. According to this gospel, Jesus is said to have expressed on the cross a desire to quench his thirst.¹ But the first two gospels give us to understand that his cry to God in itself awoke the pity of the by-standers;² and it is most probable that he did not utter any want in that moment of increasing agony, the fourth gospel attributing the exclamation 'I thirst' to the necessity there was for the fulfillment of a passage of the Old Testament.³ The statement also, that Jesus died ejaculating, 'It is finished,'⁴ appears to belong to the group of traditions used in the fourth gospel, and is not confirmed by the older Evangelists.

The oldest tradition knows only of *one* utterance of Jesus on the cross,⁵ and that is the exclamation of utter loneliness under the shadow of the death-struggle—that entirely credible utterance which could not possibly have been invented, as it was irreconcilable with the ideas which very early began to prevail concerning the Divinity of the person of Jesus, and it was on this account passed over by the later tradition.

Three exclamations on the cross ascribed to Jesus are derived from the document followed by Luke. Of these three, the first⁶ appears to be the most authentic, the second⁷ less so, and the third⁸ the least credible, which appeared likewise to the still later tradition of the fourth gospel as inappropriate. That Jesus, after the example of a devout personage of the Old Testament,⁹ should have commended his departing spirit into the hands of his Heavenly Father, was at the beginning of the second century offensive to the idea of the Godhead of Christ, which had become more distinctly defined. From the point of view of the fourth Evangelist all the words of Jesus on the cross, as handed down by the other gospels, appeared inappropriate. How could the 'Logos,' the personal self-revelation of the Heavenly Father, have said of himself that he was forsaken of God? How could his Jewish judges, whom the fourth gospel describes as the malignant instruments of Satan, be excused by Jesus as having sinned against him in igno-

¹ John xix. 28.

² The passage is Ps. lxix. 22.

³ Mark xv. 34; Matt. xxvii. 46.

⁴ Luke xxiii. 43.

⁵ Mark xv. 36; Matt. xxvii. 48.

⁶ John xix. 30.

⁷ Luke xxiii. 34.

⁸ Luke xxiii. 46.

⁹ Ps. xxxi. 6.

rance? Whether a malefactor, without making any previous confession of faith in the Divine Sonship of Jesus, could become a member of the kingdom of God, was, at least from the point of view of the fourth gospel, doubtful; and the Logos, of equal being with God, could not commend his spirit into the hands of the Father, being in and of himself perfectly one with the Spirit of the Father. On the other hand, the fourth gospel has reported three other utterances of the Crucified One: the first, receiving his mother into full favour, making provision for her;¹ the second, testifying that in his fate a prophecy of the Old Testament regarding his last moments was fulfilled;² and finally, a word which puts the seal of a victorious completion upon the whole work and suffering of Jesus³—a human word, a mediatorial word, and a Divine word.

For the moral consecration of the character of the Crucified One, these seven utterances are not needed. Only one of them is undoubtedly genuine; how many of the others were really his may be open to question. His silence, however, the sign of child-like submission, of imperturbable trust in God, of lowly obedience to his Heavenly Father, remains the most exalted revelation of his holy character. His cry of suffering in the death-struggle is an utterance of the infinite depth of agony which he bore. This agony he overcame, and the pillar of the cross became the throne of his triumph. Even if he spoke not the words, 'It is finished,' the moment of his death was the consummation of his life-work.

¹ John xix. 26.² John xix. 28.³ John xix. 30.

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE GLORIFICATION.

1. ALL the Evangelical accounts testify to the profound, morally elevating impression which the demeanour of Jesus on the cross made and left upon numbers of those present, and especially within the circle of his community. Although of his disciples the men fled from the vicinity of the cross, the *women* showed the more strikingly their strength of character by their sympathy for the Master in his death-agonies. And that they wished to pay the last honours to the departed by embalming his corpse, according to the custom of the Jews, is an irresistible proof that the horrors of his death had not been able to shake their faith in the sanctity of his life, and in the moral exaltedness of his person.¹ Even a member of the High Council, Joseph of Arimathea, who had taken no part in the condemnation of Jesus,² had the courage to beg the body from the Roman Procurator, that it might be respectfully buried.³ Though he had not ventured before the condemnation of Jesus to avow himself openly as a disciple, yet the greatness of character shown by Jesus on the cross had made such an overpowering impression upon him, that no concern for consequences could deter him from giving this proof of reverence and love for the Crucified One. Only in the way in which Jesus bore his suffering, and overcame the terrors of death, did he reveal the full glory of his spirit, which until then had been hidden from many. The depth of his death-agonny became the height of his glorification.

The apostles, in particular, could not be insensible to the mighty impression which had gone forth from the cross. The paralysing terror which had prostrated them, in consequence of the arrest, condemnation, and execution of Jesus,

¹ Mark xvi. 1; Luke xxiii. 55.

² Luke xxiii. 50.

³ Mark xv. 43; Matt. xxvii. 57; Luke xxiii. 50; John xix. 38.

began to be dispelled by the revival of love, confidence, and hope, and in this too the women were first. They had visited the grave of Jesus at sunrise on the morning of the first day of the week, and found the stone rolled away, the grave empty. At the place where the body of Jesus had lain, they saw, as they believed, a heavenly apparition. They fell into an ecstasy, the consequence of the excitement which their womanly sensibility had just undergone; but they did not, at first, venture even to speak of the mysterious occurrence. Jesus himself did not appear to the women, but the angel is said to have announced to them that Jesus would appear personally to his disciples in Galilee.¹ The whole conduct of the women, the visit to the grave at the early dawn, the vision of the angel, the announcement of the approaching appearance of Jesus in Galilee,—all furnish indubitable proof that the faith in the indestructible life of Jesus had, by the manner of his dying, received new nourishment and strength in some of his followers. The *oldest* tradition knows nothing of appearances of Jesus in Jerusalem, but that the women found the grave empty it distinctly asserts.² The conviction, however, that the Risen Jesus would appear to the apostles in Galilee, the earliest and most comprehensive theatre of his career, must, but a few days after his death, have been general among his disciples in Jerusalem. A *later* tradition has embellished the account of what the angels said at the open grave;³ the *still later* tradition has entirely left it out. Instead of the direction to go and meet Jesus in Galilee, the third gospel has only a reference to the declaration which Jesus made in Galilee to his disciples before his final journey to Jerusalem, concerning his approaching suffering, dying, and rising.⁴

Besides an amplification of the oldest report, of an angel appearing to the women at the grave, the *first* gospel has an account unknown to the oldest Evangelist—namely, that Jesus, on the first day of the week after the crucifixion, appeared at Jerusalem to the two women returning from the grave. But, according to this report also, the Risen One was to reveal himself in Galilee, not in Jerusalem, to his disciples.⁵

¹ Mark gives the simplest and most primitive account of the resurrection of Jesus (xvi. 1-8).

² Mark xvi. 4.

³ Matt. xxviii. 2.

⁴ Luke xxiv. 6.

⁵ Matt. xxviii. 9.

The appearance of the angels, as well as the appearance of Jesus, had but the purpose of giving a direction to the disciples, through the women, to meet the Risen One in Galilee. There, according to the first Evangelist, Jesus really met the eleven upon a mountain, and took leave of them with the declaration that now all power was given unto him in Heaven and upon earth. At the same time he gave them his last instructions, commanding them to make all nations his disciples by baptizing and teaching, and promised them his powerful assistance to the end of the world.¹ According to the documents which the *third* gospel followed,² not one angel, but two angels, appeared to several women at the grave, but Jesus himself did not appear to them. The reports of the women, moreover, found no credit among the apostles. Yet Jesus appeared, according to this Evangelist, in the evening—not in the morning—of the first day of the week after the crucifixion, to two unknown disciples on the way to Emmaus, in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem. He walked and talked with them as an ordinary person, conversed with them especially about the Messianic promises of the Old Covenant, sat down with them at table, and vanished out of their sight when blessing and distributing the bread.³

In the meanwhile, Jesus had appeared also to Peter in Jerusalem,⁴ and to the eleven disciples gathered together on the evening of the same first day of the week after the crucifixion. According to this gospel, Jesus refuted the supposition that he was a 'spirit,' by showing his hands and feet, that had been nailed to the cross, in order that they might be seen and touched, and he ate of a broiled fish and of a honeycomb, the object being to convince his assembled disciples of his bodily existence.⁵ He availed himself also of this occasion to prove to them, from the Scriptures of the Old Covenant, that in his suffering, death, and resurrection, the promise of Moses, of the Prophets, and of the Psalms was fulfilled. And, on this same evening, happened in Jerusalem what is reported by the first two Evangelists to have taken place upon a mountain in Galilee. He blessed his

¹ Matt. xxviii. 18.

² Luke xxiv. 10. The 'Primitive Mark' is either not used here by Luke, or very freely treated.

³ Luke xxiv. 13-32.

⁴ Luke xxiv. 34.

⁵ Luke xxiv. 37-43.

disciples, and bade them farewell. According to the older tradition, preserved by the first Evangelist, Jesus made the promise on the Galilean mountain to his disciples to be with them always until the end of the world; but, according to the later tradition of the third gospel, after giving his command to the disciples not to leave Jerusalem until they were endued with the power of the Spirit from on high, he was parted from them and carried up to Heaven.¹

2. The evangelical tradition, in regard to the events following the crucifixion, varies in the *fourth* gospel materially from the older sources made use of by the first three Evangelists. Not several women, but only Mary Magdalene, according to the fourth gospel, visited the grave early in the morning of the first day of the week.² Peter and John convinced themselves, after the intelligence received from Mary, that the corpse was no longer in the grave,³ but they found it very hard to believe the fact of the resurrection.⁴ Then, first Mary has a vision, and sees two angels,⁵ as recorded likewise in the third gospel. The appearance of Jesus follows immediately upon this appearance of angels, under wholly different circumstances, however, from those stated in the third gospel. While, according to the third gospel, Jesus suffered himself to be touched, and took food; according to the fourth, Mary is not permitted to touch him, and is only directed to inform the disciples—‘his brethren’—that he had not yet ascended to his Heavenly Father, but was about to ascend.⁶ And with this, within the circle of this tradition, the history of Jesus is concluded, and he does not appear again to his disciples. He does not appoint to meet them either upon a mountain in Galilee or at Jerusalem; he merely sends word to them through Mary—probably because she had distinguished herself above the other disciples by her zeal and fidelity—that he lived, and was about to enter into full possession of the heavenly imperishable life with his Father and their Father, with his God and their God.

The account, therefore, of two other appearances of the

¹ Luke xxiv. 51; compare Acts i. 4-9.—The Book of Acts differs from Luke's account in the gospel in representing the appearances of the Risen One as having been repeated during forty days. It follows a later document.

² John xx. 1.

³ John xx. 6.

John xx. 12.

⁴ John xx. 9; compare Luke xxiv. 12.

⁵ John xx. 17.

Risen One, mentioned supplementarily in the fourth gospel, must have been derived from other sources, which were related to those used by Luke, but took a new shape in the hands of the fourth Evangelist. According to this account, Jesus, on the evening of the first day of the week after the crucifixion, came among the assembled disciples, *the doors being shut*—thus as a spirit without a material body—and, after saluting them, showed them his hands and his side, to convince them of his bodily existence.¹ Then he took leave of them. What the *first* gospel represents him as doing on *the mountain in Galilee*, he does, according to the fourth gospel, in Jerusalem; he gives his apostles the commission to convert mankind, and bestows on them his Holy Spirit, and the power to remit sins. Thus, from the kindred account in the *third* gospel, according to which they were to tarry in Jerusalem until they were endued with power from on high, the fourth gospel varies; but with the promise contained in that gospel, of the approaching return of Jesus by means of the revealing of his Holy Spirit, this representation entirely agrees.² The narrative of another appearance of Jesus, eight days later, in the presence of Thomas, who was absent on the previous occasion, is evidently an addition taken from another source. This narrative tells us that Jesus came again among the assembled disciples, *the doors being shut*, and offered his hands to be touched, and his side to be felt by Thomas,³ in order to move him to a belief in his resurrection. In a closing addition, it is declared that the Risen One had done many other ‘signs’ in the presence of his disciples,⁴ of which, however, in a later supplement to the gospel, only one is mentioned.⁵ This appearance at the sea of Tiberias plainly betrays, in its details, the traces of a post-apostolic legend. The intercourse of Jesus with his disciples is there represented as if he were still living an earthly life. As, at an early period upon the shores of the same sea when calling his first disciples,⁶ so now, in taking his departure, he causes a miraculous draught of fishes;⁷ Peter—who, by the denial of his Master, had shown himself unworthy the apostolic office—is solemnly received again by Jesus into the company of the apostles; and, finally, Jesus corrects a

¹ John xx. 19.² John xiv. 16.³ John xx. 26.⁴ John xx. 30.⁵ John xxi. 1.⁶ Luke v. 1.⁷ John xxi. 4.

saying respecting John that had gone abroad, in case this apostle had not lived to see the coming of Jesus.

Finally, an addition in the second gospel¹ is evidently a later composition, drawn from the older evangelical reports; its origin is to be attributed to the fact that the gospel appeared to end abruptly with the eighth verse.

3. The various sources of tradition concerning the appearances of Jesus after his death may, on the whole, be distinguished with tolerable clearness in the following manner:—

a. *The oldest account*, contained in the *Primitive Mark*, states only that, early in the morning of the first day of the week after the crucifixion, some women, disciples of Jesus, visited his grave and found it empty. Upon this occasion an angel is said to have appeared, to inform them that Jesus, in accordance with a previous understanding with his disciples,² would appear to them in Galilee. *Of an actual appearance of Jesus, the oldest source of tradition affords no information.* The idea that the last part of this document is missing is a mere conjecture.

b. In the *first gospel*, the author of which made use of the *Primitive Mark*, we find a double manipulation of this oldest account. *First*, Jesus is represented to have appeared upon the morning of the resurrection to the women in *Jerusalem*; and, *secondly*, to have taken leave of his disciples upon the *mountain in Galilee* referred to by the angel. This second statement is possibly an extension, an inference drawn from the *Primitive Mark*; it stands in contradiction with the first.

c. As the elder narrative contained no particulars of the appearances of the risen Jesus, a later source of tradition, used by the *third Evangelist*, sought to satisfy the demand of the reflective understanding. The appearances of Jesus are not, as in the *Primitive Mark*, merely promised by an angel, or, as in the *first gospel*, transiently perceived by the women, who are directed to inform the disciples that they were to go to Galilee;³ but these appearances occur to the men, the disciples, in *Jerusalem*, and that on the very day of the

¹ Mark xvi. 9-20.

² This appointment seems to refer to Mark xiv. 28, the declaration of Jesus upon his last visit to Gethsemane.

³ The statement in Matt. xxviii. 9, that the women held Jesus by the feet, is intended, not to prove that the Risen One was really flesh and blood, but to express the reverential feelings of the women.

resurrection. The source of this tradition starts, beyond doubt, from the supposition that the physical organization of the Risen One remained unchanged, and that even the functions of the lungs, of digestion, and of locomotion, had suffered no derangement from the death on the cross. Not as a glorified 'spirit,' but as a real man, did the Risen One, according to this tradition, enter among his justly astonished disciples. The aim of the account was to dissipate every doubt as to the corporeal reality of the Risen One; but, in truth, the doubt is the more strengthened by the Risen One passing without difficulty through closed doors, suddenly vanishing like a disembodied spirit from before the eyes of the disciples, and by his being carried up to heaven. The demand of the reflective understanding is acknowledged by this tradition, it is true, but is not by any means met. The aim was to dissipate doubt, but doubt is of necessity strengthened by the contradictions involved in the accounts.

d. Still less satisfaction for this demand is found in the statements of the *fourth* gospel. At one time the Risen One is represented as a supramundane 'spirit'—Mary, for example, must not touch him; at another time he bears himself like a real man—in the wounds of his hands and side Thomas lays his fingers. Now he comes to his assembled disciples through closed doors, now again he requires his disciples to believe that the organs of his body are real flesh and bone.

e. The tradition in the *last supplement* of the fourth gospel departs the farthest from the oldest report. Here Jesus holds intercourse with his disciples entirely as if he were still living among them.¹

According to all the evangelical accounts, the appearances of the risen Jesus have substantially one and the same purpose—to give to the life-work of the Lord a completion worthy of him, and to announce his last will to the band of the disciples. Therefore, in the Primitive Mark, the angel directs them to go to Galilee, to receive the last instructions from Jesus; therefore, in the first gospel, Jesus directs them to go among the nations; therefore, in the third gospel, he gives them his last blessing, and promises them the Holy Spirit. For the same reason, in the fourth gospel, he sends

¹ John xxi. 4 *et seq.*

them forth, and gives them the Holy Spirit. All that he thus does is in keeping with his personal dignity and his official position. So far the tradition rests upon historical ground. The case is different with the final supplement to the fourth gospel. This has, throughout, secondary purposes—partly to prove the miraculous and prophetic gifts of the Risen One, partly to vindicate the memory of Peter, and partly to account for the death of John before the personal return of Jesus. So little does the Risen One appear here in truly *new* glory, that the incidents narrated might be understood without any difficulty as belonging to Jesus' early career in Galilee.

4. The accounts of the resurrection undoubtedly form a necessary conclusion to the evangelical history. They serve to complete the historical delineation of the character of Jesus. *It is an indisputable fact that in the early morning of the first day of the week following the crucifixion, the grave of Jesus was found empty.* The place of the sepulchre was known to hundreds. How could the belief that the grave was found empty have arisen, and have continued uncontradicted, had it not been really so? The belief of the disciples in the rising of Jesus from the grave was certainly founded, at the first, upon the fact of the grave being empty. The community at Jerusalem explained it to themselves as a miracle of Divine Omnipotence, and supposed it to have been effected by means of angels. Thus arose the oldest tradition of the apparition of an angel, resting upon the declaration of deeply-excited women.

It is a second fact, that the disciples and other members of the apostolic community were convinced that they had seen Jesus after his crucifixion. Appearances of the Crucified One are reported by the Evangelists with such unanimity, on the whole, although varying in particulars, that those who first reported them must have believed in them beyond doubt; and certain it is that these appearances contributed much to collect and strengthen the community of disciples, bowed down and crushed as they were in consequence of the crucifixion of Jesus. We have, in the Apostle Paul,¹ a classic witness of the fact that appearances of Christ have occurred in the apostolic community, and in proof thereof he refers

¹ 1 Cor. xv. 4.

to five hundred brethren, most of whom were still living in his time, to whom Christ had appeared.¹

It is a third fact, that the appearances of Jesus after his death, related in the gospels, had, substantially, no other character than that which marked the appearance of Christ to the Apostle Paul upon his journey to Damascus.² Paul places the appearance of Christ to himself in the same category with all other appearances mentioned by him, including those in the gospels, and as in every respect equivalent. Thence we may conclude with certainty, that the accounts which show the body of the Risen One as an earthly body, with material organs, cannot be well-grounded. The account in the Book of Acts, though not free from fabulous elements, does not show that the Risen One wrought upon the apostle through the organs of a material body.³ It was an appearance of light, accompanied by a voice, which, according to this representation, Paul perceived. He himself describes the appearance of Christ to him as emphatically an *inner* revelation of Christ; it had pleased God to reveal his son in him.⁴ Consequently the Risen One is the *transfigured and glorified Christ the Lord, who is the Spirit*,⁵ as likewise the fourth gospel represents him, essentially the living spirit, leading his community into all truth, who, after his glorification in death, will penetrate it with his life ever more effectively.

Thus Jesus—according to the evangelical tradition—has celebrated in his resurrection a *victory of the eternal spirit* over the letter of Jewish statutes, and over the delusions of Gentile desires. As the Risen One, he is exalted above earthly powers and the limitations of sense. When he comes among his disciples, the doors being shut, it is a *symbol* that thenceforth he reveals himself to his disciples invisibly to the bodily eye, and that his community shall henceforth see him with the inner eye of the spirit. It is through the appearances of Christ that the disciples arrive, in a way unknown before, at a clear, untroubled consciousness of the character of their Master, as spiritual and eternal, and therefore *essentially Divine*. They now discern his kingdom as a kingdom of the spirit and of the truth. Now it becomes manifest to them how his Messianic kingship, in Heaven and upon earth, consists in making all nations his

¹ 1 Cor. xv. 6.

² Acts ix. 3; xxii. 6; xxvi. 13.

⁴ Gal. i. 16.

³ 1 Cor. xv. 8.

⁵ 2 Cor. iii. 17.

disciples, and in illumining all mankind with the light of his gospel.¹ Now they understand his mission of peace in the true light of the historical development of salvation among the nations. They see that the promises of the Old Covenant can find their true fulfillment, not in the splendour of an earthly crown, but in the pure fire of holy love, glorified in suffering and self-sacrifice. Now they are confirmed in the joyful confidence that the Spirit makes alive, and are no longer in doubt that the letter kills.

It is customary to regard the *physical* reanimation of the Crucified One as the *essential* point in the accounts of the resurrection, and to rest the faith in the power of the Gospel for overcoming the world upon this *external* fact. That Jesus came forth from the grave on the third day after his crucifixion with the *same* body that had hung upon the cross, that his body could be felt by the hands of his disciples, that his organic functions went on as before, appears to many as an indispensable condition of the success of Christianity. Only thus, it is thought, can be explained the sudden revival of the faith of the disciples, which by preceding events had been so much shaken. But this entirely overlooks the fact that the women showed courage and devotion even *before* the resurrection of Jesus; that the apostles, on the evening of the first day of the week after the crucifixion, before they had had an appearance of Christ, were, according to the later tradition, *assembled*² in Jerusalem, and therefore neither scattered nor wholly disheartened; and that the *imparting of the Holy Spirit* on the day of Pentecost first kindled in the apostles and the community the fire of an unconquerable faith, and the glow of self-sacrificing love. To a faith resting upon the *external* fact of a *bodily* resurrection of Jesus, the Apostle Paul has denied all worth; for he says, 'Though we have known Christ after the *flesh*, yet now henceforth know we him *no more thus*. If any man be in Christ, he is a *new* creature: the old has passed away, all has become new.'³ Jesus Christ, the risen, the glorified, the exalted one, is as such the *living one* in his community, and therefore *with* his community until the end of the world.⁴ If, after his crucifixion, he had returned in a material body, the same as before,

¹ Matt. xxviii. 19.

² 2 Cor. v. 16, 17.

³ Luke xxiv. 33.

⁴ Matt. xxviii. 20.

among men, and if this reanimation had been the most effectual expression of victory gained by him on the cross over sin, death, and condemnation, why should he not in that case have shown himself to his Jewish judges and to the Roman Procurator? Why did he not appear in the streets of Jerusalem, to the people who had been so grossly mistaken in regard to his person? Why did he not, by his mere appearance, revive the courage of his affrighted adherents everywhere, and at the same time bring upon his malignant foes an annihilating defeat? Nothing of the kind happened. The Risen One appeared only in the small circle of the apostles, and in the community of his disciples, exclusively to those who believed in him before his death, and not to those who had rejected and killed him. His appearances were so many clearer visions of his character, which before had been overcast and dim, in the hearts of those who believed in him. He has proved himself in them as the *ever-living one*, building his kingdom on earth by his Word and his Spirit, delivering Jews and Gentiles from the yoke of the statute, fulfilling the demands of the law by the spirit of evangelical truth and freedom, ever anew taking away the curse of the letter from the nations, and kindling in mankind from age to age, in an ever brighter flame, the life of love.

5. It creates a feeling of sadness to observe how many are still seeking to lodge the truth of Christianity in others upon external grounds which can never be a sound basis for it. This especially applies to the fact of the resurrection, the only indisputably sufficient proof of which is the proof of *the spirit and of the power*. Jesus Christ has truly risen; for he lives in his community—not in flesh and blood, not perceptible to the senses, not seen by the earth-bound eye, but clearly perceived by the children of the Spirit, always present to the eye of faith; daily and hourly, in the quiet sphere of individual life, as well as in the pioneering events of the world's history, proving himself the Saviour of mankind. Those who do *not* believe in the real presence of this living Christ in the history of the world and in individual life must, in order not to doubt altogether his existence in history, endeavour to adduce authentic proof that more than eighteen centuries ago he lived on earth in the body some time after his death, and was carried up in the body to heaven.

The Christian community needs now, more than ever, a living Christ, who in death conquered death, and became for time and eternity the creator of imperishable life in the history of nations, and in the lives of individuals. The attempt has been renewed in the present time to bring again the Christian communities under the yoke of the letter, and into subjection to obsolete statutes. Hierarchs of the stamp of Caiaphas, and statesmen of the character of Pilate, still nail Jesus Christ to the pillar of the cross. To them Christianity is a shell and not a living germ—the Church an institution of priests instead of a living communion. Christianity to them seems to be established for the enthralment, not for the deliverance, of the nations—a scourge of Divine wrath, not a gift of Divine grace. The kingdom of God, in its truth, freedom, and spirituality, is to them a creation of the phantasy, the Saviour a dogmatic idea, faith a formula of catechism by which to keep children, large and small, in order.

The living Christ, although remaining hidden from Pharisees and Herodians, is nevertheless, with ever-growing clearness and power, revealed to babes. *He lives in his community*; he takes up his abode now, as of old in Galilee, in the homes of the people; the poor, the lowly, the despised, those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, the children are his loved ones. Here is his home, the community his temple; *the living Christ is the spirit of the community*. It is incumbent upon the Christian community, in the truth and freedom of the Gospel, to win again the right consciousness of itself, of its destination, its work, its dignity, its true life and calling, and therewith to serve the nations. In this it will all the sooner succeed, the sooner it attains again to a right perception and living appreciation of the person of Jesus Christ. For he must become known through the freedom of thought, through the truth of faith and love—the living and therefore the truly historical Christ, who not only taught in the body centuries ago in Galilee, and suffered in Jerusalem, but still *lives on* in all those in whom his word has become spirit and life. To the liberty of the Gospel all nations are called, and the truth of the Gospel will make them free.



APPENDIX.



CRITICAL AND HISTORICAL ILLUSTRATIONS.

APPENDIX.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

1. p. 19. That we possess in the gospel according to Mark the earliest compilation of the history of the Redeemer is now a tolerably sure result of the inquiry into the origin of the gospels, and is a result of very considerable weight in favour of the historical credibility of the evangelical narrative. *Papias*, Bishop of Hierapolis, in a fragment of his 'Exposition of the Lord's Sayings' (*Λογίων κυριακῶν ἐξήγησις*) preserved by Eusebius,¹ mentions as the earliest witness for Mark's gospel the *Presbyter John*, who, though not an apostle, was a contemporary and pupil of the apostles. Papias (in the first half of the second century) had learned from the Presbyter John that Mark was an 'interpreter' (*ἐρμηνευτής*) of the Apostle Peter, and carefully wrote down what was impressed upon his memory by Peter, both the sayings and doings of Jesus, only not in chronological order (*οὐ μέντοι τάξει*). The Presbyter John added² that Mark never heard the Lord himself, nor had he been a follower of his, but after the death of Jesus he attached himself to Peter, who delivered his discourses with reference to the needs of his hearers, and not in any precise historical order (*ὥσπερ σύνταξιν τῶν κυριακῶν ποιούμενος λογίων*). Mark therefore had committed no error in recording some things in the order in which they were impressed on his memory. One thing only had he been careful about, neither to keep back nor to pervert anything that he had heard.

There is no reason to doubt this report, which Papias, a man weak, it is true, but of good character, had obtained from a contemporary and pupil of the apostles themselves. All the later statements concerning the relation of the second gospel to John Mark in like manner assume the credibility of this report. *Irenæus* designates Mark as

¹ Hist. Eccles. III. 40.

² *Tholuck* (Glaubwürdigkeit der ev. Geschichte, p. 243) erroneously takes the words quoted above for the words of Papias. They are a continuation of the statement of John.

interpres et sectator Petri,¹ and mentions a party that preferred his gospel to the other gospels.² *Tertullian*, in consequence of the relation of Mark to Peter, refers the second gospel directly to the authority of Peter: *Marcus quod edidit Evangelium, Petri affirmatur*, in the same way in which he refers the gospel of Luke to Paul: *nam et Lucæ digestum Paulo adscribere solent*.³ *Clement of Alexandria*, according to a report in *Eusebius*,⁴ in his 'Hypotyposes' placed the origin of Mark's gospel in Rome, and connected it with the labours of Peter in that city. At the urgent desire of the hearers of Peter, Mark, according to *Clement of Alexandria*, wrote down the substance of the discourses of this apostle without being either required or forbidden to do it by Peter, although Peter had knowledge of Mark's work (*ὅπερ ἐπιγνόντα τὸν Πέτρον προρεπτικῶς μήτε κωλύσαι μήτε προτρέψασθαι*). According to another report in *Eusebius*,⁵ contradicting this, Peter not only approved the proceeding of Mark, but encouraged him with his authority; and Mark is even said to have preached in Egypt the gospel which he wrote, and to have founded churches in Alexandria.⁶ *Jerome* has in his way combined these different statements.⁷

John Mark, according to the notices of him in the New Testament, was born in Jerusalem, of Jewish descent, and converted by Peter,⁸ who was well known in the house of Mark's mother, where the Christians were wont regularly to meet. At a later period, Mark connected himself with Barnabas and Paul, whom he accompanied to Antioch,⁹ and then upon their first missionary journey,¹⁰ as far as Perga, where he left them and returned to Jerusalem.¹¹ His relations to Paul were disturbed by this early withdrawal from the missionary field, indicative of a want of due zeal; and he attached himself later on more closely to Barnabas, whose nephew he was.¹² Becoming reconciled, however, after some time with Paul, and receiving from him instructions for the Church at Colosse,¹³ he proved himself useful.¹⁴ After the death of Paul, he appears to have attached himself again to Peter; the time between the rupture and reconciliation with Paul he seems to have spent partly with Barnabas and partly with Peter. The close connection of his family with Peter, and the fact that he was his immediate pupil, being considered,¹⁵ nothing was more natural than that, after his breach with Paul, he should connect himself again with Peter, especially as his home was in Jerusalem. According to a later account,¹⁶ he went with Peter to Babylon, and was there, as his spiritual 'son,' in very intimate relation with him.

But the chief question now is: when did Mark write his gospel?

¹ Adv. Haer. III. 10, 6.

⁴ Hist. Eccles. VI. 14.

⁷ Catal. Script. Eccles. 18.

¹⁰ Acts xiii. 5.

¹³ Acts xv. 37 et seq.; Col. iv. 10.

¹⁴ 2 Tim. iv. 11.

² L. c. III. 11, 7.

⁵ L. c. II. 15.

⁸ Acts xii. 12.

¹¹ Acts xiii. 13.

¹⁵ Acts xii. 12.

³ Adv. Marc. IV. 5.

⁶ L. c. II. 16.

⁹ Acts xii. 25.

¹² Col. iv. 10.

¹⁶ 1 Pet. v. 13.

As it was made use of by the authors of the first and third gospels, it must have been early in existence. And as it was written during Mark's most intimate association with Peter, it was most probably composed before the death of Paul,—during the time of the rupture with Paul, that is, between the years 45–58 after Christ. It is true, this is not reconcilable with the report of Irenæus in Eusebius,¹ according to which Mark did not write his gospel until after the death of the Apostles Peter and Paul. But this report rests on an erroneous conclusion drawn from the tradition preserved by Papias; and it does not hold good when Bleek², from the fact that Mark prepared his written accounts 'as he remembered' (*ὅσα ἐμνημόνευσεν*), draws the conclusion that the Presbyter John and Papias could not have expressed themselves thus, had their belief been that Peter was still living, and that Mark was with him at the time the gospel was written. From the statement that 'Mark, who was Peter's interpreter, wrote carefully as he remembered' (*Μάρκος μὲν ἑρμηνευτὴς Πέτρου γενόμενος ὅσα ἐμνημόνευσεν ἀκριβῶς ἔγραψεν*),³ it may with far greater justice be inferred that Mark availed himself of his position as 'hermeneutes' of Peter, to write down the oral statements of Peter, so far as he remembered them from hearing, but not by direction of Peter, perhaps not with any positive understanding with him, and therefore it is not likely that he asked the apostle's revision of what he wrote.

That Mark wrote his gospel during the lifetime of Peter, and while Peter was still engaged in public teaching, rests principally upon the statement that, 'although he wrote as he remembered, it was not in the exact order in which the things were said or done by Christ' (*ὅσα ἐμνημόνευσεν ἀκριβῶς ἔγραψεν οὐ μέντοι τάξει τὰ ὑπὸ τοῦ Χριστοῦ ἢ λεχθέντα ἢ πραχθέντα*).⁴ These words are generally understood to mean either that Mark wrote his notes without connection, especially without regard to chronological order,⁵ or that he did not set down the separate evangelical events precisely in the order in which they occurred.⁶ But it would be very strange if Papias had without qualification pronounced a gospel to have been composed without any regard to arrangement, in which it is impossible to deny a certain chronological order in the connection of the events which it relates. There is, moreover, no rational ground for such an entire lack of order, reflecting so little credit upon the author. But least of all is such a want of order intelligible, if Mark did not write until after the death of Peter, for in this case there would have been ample time to revise and arrange the materials.

These difficulties vanish when the passage in Eusebius above referred to is understood as follows: Mark was 'hermeneutes,' or inter-

¹ Hist. Eccles. V. 10.

² Einl. in das N. T. p. 116, Anmerk.

³ Hist. Eccles. III. 41.

⁴ Hist. Eccles. III. 40.

⁵ Schleiermacher, Studien und Kritiken (1832), p. 759.

⁶ Bleek, Einl. in das N. T. p. 114, &c., and most others.

preter to Peter on his missionary travels. Peter needed such an assistant, because he had not sufficient practice in the Greek and Latin languages to enable him to deliver discourses of any length in those tongues. Mark wrote down the substance of Peter's discourses, interpreted by him, so far as he could remember them, immediately afterwards. Thus (*μέμροι*) he did not write his whole gospel *at once*. It grew, as it were, gradually, with certain intervals and divisions, out of the statements of Peter interpreted one after another. This view does not by any means exclude the supposition of a final redaction of the gospel on the part of Mark. And hence the arrangement of the contents in our gospel according to Mark is probably the work of Mark himself.

This 'Primitive Mark'—which comes neither from an apostle and eyewitness, nor from an authority contemporary with the evangelica history, but which is based upon the oral discourses of an apostle, Peter, containing statements taken down immediately after their delivery, which could be given all the more accurately as the author was interpreter to the apostle, and consequently had made the materials substantially his own—is, without doubt, a very important document for a trustworthy historical representation of the character of Jesus. This document does not, however, lie before us in its original form. It has been worked over by a later hand, but without any essential change in its contents. Here and there, not always happily, passages have been abridged, and sometimes explanations added.¹ If the hypothesis of *Griesbach*, that Mark copied from Matthew and Luke,² is still maintained even by careful investigators, and contended for with earnestness by *De Wette*, it is because these inquirers are biassed, apparently, by the more artistic literary character of the first and third gospels. We refer the reader to the thorough refutation of this hypothesis by *Holtzmann*.³ The advocates of Griesbach's theory leave out of view that, according to the tradition of the Church also, Mark wrote his gospel before the two other synoptic gospels were written, and that its earlier origin is attested by its greater simplicity, clearness, and precision of statement. In favour of the priority of Mark's gospel, the following points deserve special consideration:—

a. Of internal marks of any literary aim there are in the second gospel scarcely any. It seeks simply to report what Jesus Christ did on earth for the establishment of his Gospel. It is accordingly entitled, in the simplest manner, 'the Gospel of Jesus Christ,' ch. i. ver. 1, *εὐαγγέλιον Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ*.⁴

b. This gospel has taken nothing from the legends of the childhood, nor does it, so far as we have it in its integrity, contain any appear-

¹ See the excellent publication of *Holtzmann*, 'Die synoptischen Evangelien,' pp. 60 *et seq.*, 110 *et seq.*

² As is still held by *Bleek*, Einl. in's N. T. p. 243.

³ See his work above referred to, p. 113, &c.

⁴ So it reads also in the Codex Sinaiticus.

ances of the Risen One. Hence it follows with well-nigh irresistible certainty, that Peter also, in his teachings, touched neither upon the one nor the other. At all events, it is thus evident that the legends respecting the nativity and childhood of Jesus did not get into circulation until a later period, and were first noticed by the later Evangelists. They are not of apostolic origin. As to the conclusion of the second gospel (xvi. 8), it is now pretty generally supposed that it did not originally run thus. But it may be with this passage as with Acts xxviii. 31. That Jesus did in some way reveal himself after his death to his disciples in Galilee is hinted at in the message of the angel,¹ and Peter distinctly designates Jesus as the Risen One. But the more the manifestation of the Risen One was withdrawn from outward sensible perception, and the more clearly it proved itself as an inward spiritual fact, so much the less could it be outwardly represented; and hence we have to recognize the appropriateness with which Mark concluded his gospel without relating the appearances of the Risen One as outward facts. Matthew's account² betrays the later legendary colouring, although the remark that some of the disciples doubted whether Jesus³ had appeared to them at all, seems to point, even in Matthew's gospel, to a supersensuous appearance of Christ. What Jesus himself is reported to have said⁴ is taken from the 'Collection of Sayings,' of which it probably formed the conclusion. *There can be no weightier testimony to the early composition of Mark's gospel than the absence in it of the appearances of the Risen One.*

c. The second gospel gives much less of a miraculous colouring to several of the evangelical events than the first and the third give. We may mention, for instance, the account of the Temptation,⁵ the sending forth of the twelve disciples,⁶ upon whom, according to the first and third Evangelists, there were conferred great miraculous powers;⁷ the prominence given in the second gospel to external means employed by Jesus in the healing of the sick,⁸ the less ornamented account of the so-called Transfiguration,⁹ and the plain account of the epileptic in contrast with the obscure representations of the first and third Evangelists.¹⁰

d. The second gospel shows marks of an earlier origin, especially in the discourses of Jesus, which are briefer and less elaborate. To say nothing of the 'Sermon on the Mount,' wholly wanting in this gospel, which it must be admitted seems to indicate an omission, there are here—with few exceptions¹¹—none of the longer discourses, and these exceptions are, in comparison with the other two gospels, of an abbreviated character.

¹ Mark xvi. 8.² Matt. xxviii. 16–20.³ Matt. xxviii. 17.⁴ Matt. xxviii. 18.⁵ Mark i. 12.⁶ Mark vi. 7.⁷ Matt. x. 8; Luke ix. 1.⁸ Mark vii. 33; viii. 23.⁹ Mark ix. 2 to be compared with Matt. xvii. 1 *et seq.*; Luke ix. 28.¹⁰ Mark ix. 14; Matt. xvii. 14; Luke ix. 37.¹¹ Mark iv. 3; ix. 39; xiii. 1.

e. The second gospel, finally, contains not a single passage from which it can be inferred that Jesus journeyed several times to Jerusalem and repeatedly took up his abode there. The idea that Jesus, before the final catastrophe, often visited Jerusalem arose at a later period. It is very probable, however, that those passages of the first and third Evangelists, which have been hitherto referred to in proof of such frequent visits to Jerusalem, must be otherwise understood—i.e., as referring to a final longer sojourn of Jesus in Judea.

In the first gospel, the character of a later time is already reflected. That its author made use of the 'Primitive Mark,' and indeed that Mark's gospel is the substantial component of his narrative, may now be considered as established.¹ But the first Evangelist made use besides of a second document, entitled by Papias 'The Sayings' (τὰ Λόγια).² Matthew is said to have written this in Hebrew, and everyone who used it 'translated it to the best of his ability' (ἡρμήνευσε δὲ αὐτὰ ὡς ἦν δυνατός ἕκαστος). Accordingly there had been in the time of Papias various 'translations' of the 'Primitive Matthew,' which at the same time did not exclude the free handling of the material, as everyone interpreted according to ability. It certainly would not be altogether linguistically inadmissible to apply the term λόγια to narrative material as well as to sayings, for, at least in the passage from Papias quoted by Eusebius, the 'Collection of the Lord's Sayings,' (σύνταξις τῶν κυριακῶν λογίων) is to be referred not only to 'what was said by Christ' (τὰ ὑπὸ τοῦ Χριστοῦ λεχθέντα), but also to 'what was done' (τὰ πραχθέντα). But it is more probable that the term λόγια in this passage was used because, according to the connection, the subject is the public teaching of Peter, and in this the didactic element—i.e. the parabolic, instructing, and reproving discourses of Jesus—was considered the most important, on which account Papias puts 'what was said' (τὰ λεχθέντα) before 'what was done' (πραχθέντα). On the other hand, it is not easy to see why Papias should have entitled the work of Matthew 'Sayings' (λόγια), if its especial aim had been a representation of the life and labours of Jesus. According to the Old Testament use of language,³ λόγιον always stands for a word of Divine revelation. The same mode of speech obtains also in the New Testament.⁴ The old Greek Fathers used the term in the same way.⁵ When Bleek⁶ refers, in proof of the opposite, to Heb. v. 12, it is to be observed that in this passage the mention of 'the sayings of God' (τῶν λογίων τοῦ θεοῦ) does not by any means refer particularly to the historical facts of the Gospel, but to the Divine utterances therein contained, which are to be obeyed,

¹ Holtzmann, Die synopt. Evangelien, p. 169 *et seq.*

² Eusebius, Hist. Eccles. III. 40.

³ Ps. i. 2; cvii. 11; cxix. 38, 60; Wisdom of Sol. xvi. 11.

⁴ Acts vii. 38; 1 Pet. iv. 11; Rom. iii. 2; Heb. v. 12.

⁵ Suicer. Thes. Eccles. II. p. 247 *et seq.*

⁶ Einl. in's N. T. p. 94.

i.e. to the evangelical sayings and precepts. The 'gospel of the Hebrews' (*εὐαγγέλιον καθ' Ἑβραίους*), mentioned by *Irenæus*¹ and by *Eusebius*,² was neither identical with the 'Logia' of Papias, nor did our Greek Matthew spring therefrom. According to the reports of Jerome, who found a copy of this gospel in the library at Cæsarea in Palestine,³ it was an apocryphal gospel with an exclusively Jewish-Christian colouring, and its contents were for the most part extravagant, and unworthy of Christ.⁴ Eusebius expresses himself in such terms that his condemnation of it is beyond all doubt.⁵

As a certain result now of critical investigation into the origin of the gospels, it is settled that besides the 'Primitive Mark' there was yet another composition,—the 'Primitive Matthew,' or Collection of the Sayings and Discourses of Jesus—put together by this apostle before the year 60, and made public. This collection was the *second chief source* which the author of the first gospel drew from; thus the fact that his gospel was received in the Christian body under the name of the Apostle Matthew is most easily explained. But the 'Collection of Sayings' was not adopted in the first gospel without change. The testimony of Papias, that everybody interpreted⁶ the *Logia* as well as he could, affords ground for the supposition that the translators allowed themselves to alter, fill out, and amplify the original text. The words 'as he was able' (*ὡς ἔν δυνάμει*) have reference not so much to the linguistic skill of the translators, as to their understanding of the matter and their ability to interpret; and these words mean that every translator as well as he could—i.e., according to the extent of his knowledge and insight into the evangelical tradition—construed into the dialects of the respective Christian communities this 'Primitive Matthew,' and consequently altered, arranged, and enlarged as, to the best of his knowledge and insight, seemed necessary, and so far as he was able to do so from his position to the whole matter of Christian doctrine. Thus, for example, it is not to be supposed that the so-called Sermon on the Mount (Matt. v.–vii.) was wrought up into a well-ordered whole in the 'Collection of Sayings,' just as it now stands in the Greek gospels, or that the parables were put together in the same order as in Matt. xiii. The author of the first gospel made use of later tradition and legend with literary freedom, and in his own way; he received into his gospel the story of the childhood of Jesus, and the account of the appearance of the Risen One in Galilee. But in his account of the childhood of

¹ Adv. Haer. I. 26, 2; III. 2, 7.

² Hist. Eccles. III. 28.

³ De Viris Illustr., 3; Adv. Pelagianos, 3, 1 in librum 18 Esaiæ proem.

⁴ De Wette, Einl. in's N. T. § 64 und 65; *Kirchhofer*, Quellensammlung, XXXVI., the passages collected.

⁵ Hist. Eccles. III. 26: 'Ἐν τοῖς τινὲς καὶ τὸ καθ' Ἑβραίων εὐαγγέλιον κατέλεξαν, ᾧ μάλιστα Ἑβραίων οἱ τὸν Χριστὸν παραδείξασθαι χαίρουσι, ταῦτα δὲ πάντα τῶν ἀντιλεγόμενων ἂν εἴη.

⁶ Euseb. Hist. Eccles. III. 40.

Jesus, the legend is as yet very little wrought up; it does not take in John the Baptist. And of the appearances of the Risen One, only one had come to the knowledge of the Evangelist.

On the other hand, there meets us from the very beginning of this gospel a distinct although not logically sustained tendency, in the attempt to establish the genealogy of Jesus. This attempt is made with primary reference to the Jews, as it begins with Abraham, their progenitor. But it belongs to a dogmatic mode of thought different from that of the Evangelist as, putting out of view its gaps and omissions,¹ it would prove the descent of Jesus from David only upon the supposition that Jesus was actually the son of Joseph. The *naïveté* with which the Evangelist uses his materials is shown in the fact that, notwithstanding his assumption that the paternal share was wanting in the conception of Jesus, he still receives into his gospel the genealogical attempt to prove Jesus, through his paternal genealogical tree, to have been descended from David.

*That Jesus was the son of David, the Messiah foretold and promised in the Old Testament,*² is what he takes pains to show in his gospel. By a misunderstanding of prophetic passages, he draws his proof of this point from the supernatural birth of Jesus,³ from the place of his birth, Bethlehem,⁴ from his alleged abode in Egypt,⁵ from Herod's cruel treatment of the children of Bethlehem,⁶ and from his subsequent dwelling-place, Nazareth (by an unhistorical application of the Messianic predicate 'branch' צֶמַח to the name of the place Nazareth).⁷ In all these passages the Evangelist appears not as an impartial reporter, as is the case throughout with the authors of the 'Primitive Mark' and the 'Collection of Sayings,' but shows himself to be under the influence of dogmatic bias. In narrating the events of the evangelical history, he is always more or less possessed with the idea that, because Jesus had proved himself the Messiah, all the Messianic promises of the Old Testament must be fulfilled in his person. And the Christian communities, under the influence of their dogmatic conviction, accepted the contents of the evangelical narrative without testing its historical credibility. To this point of view, thus dogmatically restricted, the subsequent statements of the Evangelist, as far as chap. xiv., are also accommodated. From the labours of Jesus in the region of Capernaum, the fulfilment of a prophecy in Isaiah is inferred.⁸ The Sermon on the Mount has the purpose of showing that Jesus was the new Lawgiver promised by Moses, the prophet raised up by God like Moses,⁹ the fulfiller of the Old Testament Law.¹⁰ His miracles of healing appear to the Evangelist as the fulfilment of Isaiah's prophecy.¹¹ His reserve

¹ Matt. i. 5, 8, 11.

² Matt. i. 23; compare Is. vii. 14.

³ Hosea xi. 1.

⁴ Is. viii. 23; ix. 1.

⁵ Is. liii. 4.

⁶ Jerem. xxxi. 15.

⁷ Deut. xviii. 15.

⁸ Matt. i. 1.

⁹ Micah v. 2.

¹⁰ Is. xi. 1.

¹¹ Matt. v. 17.

also, shown in forbidding his miracles to be made known, was predicted in Isaiah,¹ and observed for the sake of conformity to the prediction. Even the teaching by parables was adopted by Jesus in order that the obduracy of the Jewish people might be made clearly manifest in their insensibility to so popular a mode of instruction.²

This peculiarity of the first gospel is less apparent from the fourteenth chapter to the twenty-first, on account of the close connection of this portion of it with the 'Primitive Mark.'³ But it becomes all the more conspicuous afterwards. Mark relates simply⁴ how Jesus directed his disciples to bring him a young ass standing ready in a neighbouring village. The first Evangelist discovers in this commission a fulfillment of several passages in the prophecies.⁵ He finds the acclamations of the children at the temple foretold in the Psalms.⁶ At the mention of the abomination of desolation, he appeals to the predictions of the Prophet Daniel, while Mark is wholly silent about Daniel.⁷ The purchase of the field with the blood-money of Judas, according to the first gospel, is the fulfillment of a prophecy of Jeremiah, through a defect of memory, as the passage referred to is in Zechariah,⁸ and neither in word nor in sense does it apply to the purchase of a potter's field by the High Priest for thirty pieces of silver.⁹ The dogmatic tendency of the author of the first gospel, thus shown, is not however a particular party bias, but springs from an apologetic necessity strongly felt by the Evangelist and his contemporaries. In contending with unbelieving Judaism, it was important, especially after the overwhelming catastrophe—the destruction of Jerusalem—to adduce proof that the Jewish hope of the theocratic restoration of the kingdom of David was vain, and that in the person of Jesus was fulfilled all that Israel had to look for. The Evangelist was himself profoundly penetrated with the belief that the promises of the Old Testament were fulfilled in Jesus Christ, and he used the documents at his command conscientiously on the whole, but not without slight changes adapted to his purpose.¹⁰

The sections of his work, not contained in the 'Primitive Mark' nor in the 'Collection of Sayings,'¹¹ were very probably derived by Matthew

¹ Is. xlii. 1.

² Is. vi. 10.

³ Holtzmann, in the work already referred to, p. 169 *et seq.*

⁴ Mark xi. 1–10.

⁵ Zech. ix. 9; Is. lxii. 11.

⁶ Ps. viii. 2.

⁷ Matt. xxiv. 15; Mark xiii. 14, where the reference to Daniel has been interpolated from Matthew, at a later time, in some of the old MSS.

⁸ Zech. xi. 12.

⁹ Matt. xxvii. 9.

¹⁰ Thus, e.g., ch. i. 16, where he probably left out the words, Ἰακώβ δὲ ἐγέννησεν τὸν Ἰησοῦν τὸν λεγόμενον Χριστόν, and put in their place, τὸν ἄνδρα Μαρίας, ἐξ ἧς ἐγεννήθη Ἰησοῦς ὁ λεγόμενος Χριστός. The attribute λεγόμενος, which was not in accordance with his dogmatic idea of Jesus nor with his apologetic tendency, he left standing through the naïvely uncritical way of using his materials.

¹¹ See the enumeration of these, Holtzmann, *ib.* p. 188.

from oral tradition. Here likewise he has followed his main bias,—the apologetic regard to unbelieving Judaism. The baptism of Jesus by John was likely to give offence; Matthew takes care to add, that John at first refused to baptize Jesus.¹ Jesus still passed among the unbelieving Jews for a destroyer of the Old Testament Law; Matthew strengthens and amplifies the declaration of the Lord—extant also in Luke²—in favour of the indissolubility of the Mosaic Law, following perhaps some particular traditions, of which he had no authentic proof.³ He was also not without a polemic interest.⁴ A peculiarly beautiful word of consolation, uttered by the Lord, appears to have found acceptance with Matthew, with special reference to the then existing circumstances under which the Jewish people groaned.⁵ It suited the purpose of the Evangelist to show that even under the Old Covenant the priests might break the Sabbath without blame.⁶ A peculiar concession to the statutes of Judaism is contained in the declaration ascribed to Jesus, that the disciples were to do and observe whatever the Scribes and Pharisees commanded them to do and observe; thus, the difference between Jesus and the Scribes and Pharisees was made apparent only in the direction of practical morality.⁷ It is upon this ground of practical morality that Jesus appears to stand, according to the first Evangelist, in his announcement of the final judgment.⁸

The obviously greater prominence, in comparison with Mark, of the miraculous element in the evangelical narrative is worthy of note, in reference to the historical character of the first gospel. Thus, Matthew represents not only Jesus, but Peter also, as walking on the sea.⁹ He alone tells us of the Stater that Peter finds so incomprehensibly in the mouth of a fish.¹⁰ Even celibacy he appears to consider in some circumstances as a miraculous gift.¹¹ The purchase of the potter's field with the thirty pieces of silver,¹² appears to him a remarkable fulfilment of prophecy. He reports a miraculous dream of the wife of Pilate;¹³ and what is said of Pilate washing his hands one might almost regard as a miraculous purification of the unbelieving Roman. The miracle of the resurrection of the dead, in consequence of the earthquake at the death of Jesus,¹⁴ is found only in Matthew. The report of the incidents, almost more than miraculous, in relation to the guard at the tomb of Jesus, is peculiar to this Evangelist,¹⁵ as is also the very improbable story of the bribery of the guard.¹⁶

In the case of the first Evangelist, therefore, we certainly stand no longer upon ground purely historical. With the exception of the 'Pri-

¹ Matt. iii. 14.² Luke xvi. 17.³ Matt. v. 17-20.⁴ Matt. vii. 6, 15, 26.⁵ Matt. xi. 28-30.⁶ Matt. xii. 5.⁷ Matt. xxiii. 3. A similar concession to Judaism is made in v. 17-20.⁸ Matt. xxv. 31.⁹ Matt. xiv. 28.¹⁰ Matt. xvii. 27.¹¹ Matt. xix. 11.¹² Matt. xxvii. 3.¹³ Matt. xxvii. 19.¹⁴ Matt. xxvii. 51.¹⁵ Matt. xxvii. 62; xxviii. 11.¹⁶ Matt. xxviii. 12.

mitive Mark' and the 'Collection of Sayings,' there are no other original records accredited by eye or ear-witnesses, upon which the representation of this Evangelist rests. And how very much he is occasionally wanting in critical exactness, we have seen in the case, already mentioned, of the genealogy which he adopts. For these reasons it is necessary, for one who would represent the character of Jesus, to take the position of a critic towards this gospel.

The first gospel was written *after* the destruction of Jerusalem, as is to be inferred from the allusion to the Roman eagles, to which *Meyer*,¹ without a reason, allows no weight. When the Evangelist composed his gospel, the first part of the coming of Christ had already taken place in the βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως, the devastation of the Sanctuary by the profane hands of the heathen.² The time for the announcement of the Gospel among all nations had arrived.³ The Evangelist therefore confidently expected that the end of the then existing period of the world was near at hand. This he has plainly intimated by altering the passage from the 'Primitive Mark' where the time of the Advent, which was expected to take place after the destruction of Jerusalem, is indicated in the words, ἐν ἐκείναις ταῖς ἡμέραις μετὰ τὴν θλίψιν ἐκείνην,⁴—i. e., the beginning and the end of the 'tribulation' (θλίψις) are represented as yet to happen. The first Evangelist, on the other hand, shows by his announcing the Advent in the words, 'immediately after the tribulation of those days' (εὐθέως δὲ μετὰ τὴν θλίψιν τῶν ἡμερῶν ἐκείνων), that, at the time of his writing, he was full of the expectation of the final Judgment—an expectation which could have been raised to such a pitch only by the beginning of the Judgment having taken place immediately before upon Jerusalem. The Evangelist evidently intimates that the coming of the Lord would occur earlier than the Christians of his time expected.⁵ Hence we are enabled to understand those eschatological parables peculiar to Matthew, and strikingly expressive of the state of mind among the Jewish-Christians then living in Palestine. Of this class are: The parable of the labourers in the vineyard,⁶ which seeks to refute the idea that those who were received into the kingdom of God at the last, did not deserve the same reward at the Advent as those who had been longer converted; the parable of the two sons,⁷ which, in view of the coming great catastrophe, promises to the publicans and harlots precedence of the high priests and elders; the parable of the marriage-feast,⁸ which likewise assumes⁹ that the time for the announcement of the Gospel over the whole earth had come, and transports the reader, in a manner, to the scene of the last Judgment;¹⁰ the parable of the wise and foolish virgins,¹¹ directed against those who, even after the destruction of

¹ Ex. Handbuch zu Matt. xxiv. 28.

² Matt. xxviii. 19.

³ Matt. xx. 1-16.

⁴ Matt. xxiv. 14.

⁵ Mark xiii. 24.

⁶ Matt. xxi. 28-32.

⁷ Matt. xxii. 12.

⁸ Matt. xxiv. 15.

⁹ Matt. xxiv. 44.

¹⁰ Matt. xxii. 1-14.

¹¹ Matt. xxv. 1-13.

Jerusalem had taken place, still would not believe in the immediate proximity of the Advent. It is only from this point of view that full light is shed upon the conclusion of this gospel, which, in consideration of the point of time at which it was written, ends most appropriately with the declaration of Jesus that he would be with his own (in so great tribulation) to the completion of the last period which had just then begun.¹ We see also how the first Evangelist was induced to represent Jesus as speaking of those who had made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of Heaven's sake, *i.e.* for the sake of the Advent then at hand.² From this point of view, light is also thrown upon those much misunderstood words of Jesus, found only in Matthew—that he would give to Peter the keys of the kingdom of Heaven, and that what Peter bound on earth should be bound in Heaven.³ Particularly those keys were meant which, at the coming of the Lord, were to open the gates into his glorified community.

From these views, it follows indubitably that the first gospel stands in no slight degree below the second in authenticity and credibility, and, as an historical document, is to be used with caution in those passages in which it deviates from the 'Primitive Mark' and the 'Collection of Sayings.' But inasmuch as it is the one gospel of the first three that gives us back most fully and faithfully a second genuinely apostolical source of information, namely, the 'Collection of Sayings,' the first gospel is of very considerable historical value. In its legends of the childhood of Jesus, and in its eschatological expectations, it places the dogmatic stand-point of the Palestinian Christians soon after the year 70 in a very instructive light for us.

The third gospel was written, unquestionably, the latest of the first three. In this gospel, as in the first, the 'Primitive Mark' and the 'Collection of Sayings' are made use of, but not our Greek Matthew—whence the fact that the first gospel contains a number of sections not found in Luke is explained. The author of the first gospel is unknown to us, so also is the editor of the second; in conformity with the Church tradition,⁴ Luke is to be received as the author of the third,—the same Luke mentioned by Paul, as physician and friend beloved.⁵ He was also, in his dogmatic tendency, a disciple of Paul, by birth a Gentile; and Paul distinguished him emphatically from his Jewish-Christian partners in suffering, with whom there was little cause to be content.⁶ In the preface of his gospel, Luke speaks of himself neither as a disciple of Jesus nor as an eyewitness (*αὐτόπτης*), nor yet as *ὑπηρέτης τοῦ λόγου*—*i.e.* as an apostolic minister of the word—but as a compiler of such evangelical reports as others had written down before him.⁷ From this passage, it follows that the literary materials used by him were based originally on oral tradition, and that he sought carefully to collect the

¹ Matt. xxviii. 20.

² Matt. xix. 11.

³ Matt. xvi. 19.

⁴ Iren. adv. Haer. III. 14, 1; Euseb. Hist. Eccles. III. 4.

⁵ Col. iv. 14.

⁶ Col. iv. 11.

⁷ Luke i. 1-4.

evangelical accounts extant in his time. That, in mentioning the 'many' (πολλοί) whose labours he consulted, he must have been thinking of the gospel according to Matthew,¹ is a groundless supposition. On the contrary, it is scarcely to be supposed that Luke would have thought it necessary to write the evangelical history in the form chosen by him, had he found beforehand so extended a work as the first gospel. *Holtzmann* (agreeing with *Ritschl*, *Reuss*, *Ewald*, *Plitt*, and *Weiss*) well remarks, that one who was already acquainted with a genealogical register, according to which Jesus belonged to the royal line of David, would hardly have thought that he could accomplish this genealogical task better by having recourse to a collateral line of the house of David. And we entirely agree with *Holtzmann*, who, in the conclusion of his able inquiry regarding the controversy of critics, whether Matthew were dependent upon Luke, or Luke upon Matthew, decides that neither the one nor the other was possible, far less probable.²

The third gospel bears unmistakable signs of a mode of representation distinguished by an evident tendency. It forms the Gentile-Christian antithesis to the Jewish-Christian thesis in the evangelical history, and it aims to give to Christianity a *universal* significance. According to the preface, it is a composition intended to confirm the faith of a distinguished Gentile catechumen in evangelical truth.³ Its later origin is shown, not only by the testimony of the author, who represents himself as only a *secondary* composer, but also by the whole treatment of the material. The legend concerning the childhood is given more at length, and is more marvellous, than in the first gospel; the ante-history of John the Baptist is interwoven with it; the legend of the supernatural conception of Jesus, in comparison with the brief account in Matthew,⁴ is more developed.⁵ The Baptist, while yet in his mother's womb, bears witness to the Messianic dignity of the yet unborn Jesus; and the future mother of the Baptist, upon meeting the future mother of Jesus, becomes a prophetess.⁶ The father of the Baptist also, immediately upon the birth of his son, recognizes in him the appointed forerunner of the Messiah.⁷ The circumstances connected with the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem⁸ are of a no less legendary character. Not only are shepherds in the fields fully initiated by angels into the secret of the Messianic calling of Jesus, not only does the mother of Jesus lay the secret to heart, not only are others filled with wonder thereat, but an aged man in the temple declares, when Mary makes the customary offering of purification for her new-born child, that he should now depart in peace, since he had seen the salvation of Israel,—seen him who was set for the falling or rising of many in Israel; and an aged woman likewise gives thanks that the redemption of Israel had now appeared.⁹

¹ *Meyer*, *Ex. Handbuch zu Luc.*, i. 1-4.

² *Holtzmann*, *ib.* 264.

³ Luke i. 4.

⁴ Matt. i. 18.

⁵ Luke i. 26-38.

⁶ Luke i. 41.

⁷ Luke i. 17, 76.

⁸ Luke ii. 1.

⁹ Luke ii. 8-38.

In all these stories, of which nothing whatever is to be found in the primitive gospel or in the 'Collection of Sayings,' there is reflected the apologetic demand and endeavour of a later period, which the simple evangelical facts, carrying in themselves the evidence of the spirit and of power, were no longer sufficient to satisfy. In this period the direct impress of the unique personality of Jesus was fading dimly away into the background, and the exciting influence of the extraordinary and marvellous was needed, in order to lend attraction to the life of the Redeemer. On the other hand, these marvellous narrations are evidences of the extraordinary effect produced by the personality of Jesus, not only upon the men of his own day, but also upon generations following.

Thus it happens that the colouring of the miraculous is much stronger in the third gospel than in the first. The calling of the four first disciples, for example, is told in Mark¹ and in Matthew² in agreement with the Primitive Mark, without any marvellous additions. Luke, on the contrary, following a later legend, expands the event into a miracle of a superabundant draught of fishes, and the historical germ of the narrative,—the calling of the disciples,—recedes entirely into the shade before the miracle.³ In a similar way the raising of the young man of Nain,⁴ a narrative peculiar to Luke's gospel, appears to be the embellishment of a later legend. The later origin of this gospel is further attested by the detailed accounts of the appearances of the Risen One in Jerusalem, of which appearances the older tradition in Mark and Matthew knew nothing. While Paul classifies such appearances, of which he had information before the year 60 after Christ,⁵ as of the same description precisely with the vision of Christ that was accorded to himself on the way to Damascus, the risen Saviour in the third gospel, on the other hand, holds intercourse with his disciples as an actual man, and invites them to behold and touch his hands and feet.⁶ These accounts of Luke concerning the Risen One contradict, moreover, the reports of Mark and Matthew. While Mark tells us that the disciples were directed to go to Galilee, and while Matthew states that the Risen One actually took leave of his disciples there, according to Luke the appearances of Jesus are confined to Jerusalem. On the very day of his resurrection he is carried up to heaven,⁷ and he expressly forbids his disciples to leave Jerusalem before the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.⁸ How the legend was always growing is plainly seen in the relation of Luke's gospel to the Book of Acts, written by him afterwards, according to which, in consequence of a later tradition, the intercourse of the Risen One with his disciples is extended from one day to forty days.⁹

Furthermore, in the sections peculiar to the third gospel there is

¹ Mark i. 16.

⁴ Luke vii. 11.

⁷ Luke xxiv. 50.

² Matt. iv. 18.

⁵ 1 Cor. xv. 5.

⁸ Luke xxiv. 49.

³ Luke v. 1.

⁶ Luke xxiv. 39.

⁹ Acts i. 2.

visible a *Gentile-Christian* tendency in favour of the universality of Christianity. This appears especially in the genealogy of Christ,¹ which goes back, not, as in Matthew, to the progenitor of the Jewish people, Abraham, but to the progenitor of the human race, Adam.² Consequently the aim is, in the true style of Paul, to prove Christ to be the second Adam,³ and by virtue of his supernatural generation, like Adam, an immediate son of God.⁴ The genealogy of Luke, although varying essentially from that of Matthew, and following the collateral line of Nathan in the genealogical register of David,⁵ proves that, at the time it was made, Jesus was considered the actual son of Joseph, a belief which Luke sought to correct by adding to the words, 'being the son of Joseph' (ὡν υἱὸς τοῦ Ἰωσήφ), the words, 'as was supposed' (ὡς ἐνομίζετο).⁶ Beyond all question, this Evangelist manifests a predilection for such features in the portrait of the life of Jesus as show that the labours of Jesus extended beyond the narrow sphere of the Palestinian Jews. Thus, for example, the Samaritans receive especially favourable treatment in comparison with the Jews,⁷ while, according to Matthew,⁸ Jesus forbids his disciples to go to the Gentiles or to enter a Samaritan city. The account in Luke of the sending forth of the seventy likewise indicates the tendency in favour of the universal character of the gospel.⁹ That many passages manifest an interest, peculiar to Paul's style of teaching, in the free grace and mercy of God, has recently been remarked by *Holtzmann*.¹⁰ As instances in point, we refer to the accounts of the woman who was a sinner,¹¹ of Mary and Martha,¹² of the little flock,¹³ of the Galileans who were killed,¹⁴ to the parables of the lost piece of money and the prodigal son,¹⁵ to what is said about unprofitable servants,¹⁶ to the comparison made between Pharisees and Publicans,¹⁷ to the account of Zaccheus,¹⁸ to the treatment of the malefactors by Jesus on the cross,¹⁹ &c.

But, on the other hand, it is not just to regard the third gospel as a composition of a purely *dogmatic* character, and on this account to refuse it credibility. Even where Luke narrates less reliably, and permits himself to be swayed by the later legend, he does not, for the sake of any dogmatic purpose, *invent* the materials of the narrative, but he has in all cases recourse to the tradition accessible to him, as *Ewald*, for example, has satisfactorily shown in regard to the seventy disciples.²⁰ Such is the case with the great episode,—the so-called Journey Report.²¹ For this section of his gospel, Luke made

¹ Luke iii. 23.² Luke iii. 38.³ Rom. v. 12.⁴ Luke iii. 38; τοῦ Ἀδάμ, τοῦ θεοῦ.⁵ 2 Sam. v. 14.⁶ Luke iii. 23.⁷ Luke x. 25; xvii. 11.⁸ Matt. x. 5.⁹ Luke x. 1.¹⁰ *Holtzmann*, ib. p. 391 *et seq.*¹¹ Luke vii. 36.¹² Luke x. 38.¹³ Luke xii. 32.¹⁴ Luke xiii. 1.¹⁵ Luke xv. 1.¹⁶ Luke xvii. 10.¹⁷ Luke xviii. 9.¹⁸ Luke xix. 1.¹⁹ Luke xxiii. 39.²⁰ *Ewald*, Die drei ersten Evangelien, p. 284.²¹ From Luke ix. 51 to xviii. 30.

use of special documents which did not relate, as is commonly supposed, only to the few days spent by Jesus on his journey from Galilee to Judea. Luke, following no distinct chronological thread, generally taking *verbatim* the accounts that were in his hands, without particular examination, lacking, besides, the sure eye of a personal witness of the events which he relates, has, from the beginning of the episode, confused the representation in one main point, to which error his first source, the primitive gospel, doubtless, contributed in part. The first three Evangelists mention only *one* sojourn of Jesus in Judea, the final sojourn, and, according to their representation, it was of a very short duration. But this is apparently contradicted by a declaration of Jesus, in which he says that he had 'often' (πολλάκις) desired to gather the children of Jerusalem as a hen gathers her brood under her wings.¹ From this passage the conclusion is commonly drawn that Jesus, even according to the synoptic representation, paid several visits, more or less prolonged, to Jerusalem, and made repeated attempts to convert the inhabitants of the capital. What *Bleek* unjustly styles 'sheer desperation,'² is by no means impossible, that, as *Baur*³ and *Hilgenfeld*⁴ suppose, Jesus recognized the capital as the central point of the Jewish nation, and understood by the 'children of Jerusalem' the Jewish people in general. But *Baur*⁵ concedes that it is more natural to understand by the children of the capital those who dwelt in it. Hence he admits that the words put into the mouth of Jesus, may be taken as the words of a prophet speaking in the name of God; and *D. F. Strauss*,⁶ likewise admitting this supposition, has recently made an ingenious attempt to prove that the lamentation in Matt. xxiii. and Luke xiii. was taken from a lost writing mentioned in another passage in Luke⁷ as 'wisdom of God' (σοφία τοῦ θεοῦ). But to say nothing of the improbability, after what Luke states in his introduction, of his making use of an apocryphal work in reporting the sayings of Jesus, and of the still greater improbability of Matthew and Luke agreeing in so abnormal a proceeding, it being much more probable that their agreement is owing to a common use of the 'Collection of Sayings,' that remarkable lamentation of Jesus may be historically established in a much more satisfactory way. As it is impossible that Jesus could have said and done, in the few days which it took him to journey from Galilee to the place of the Feast, all that Luke relates in the so-called Journey Report, extending from ch. ix. 51 to ch. xviii. 30, the supposition is all the more natural that a considerable portion of

¹ Matt. xxiii. 37; Luke xiii. 34.

² Synoptische Erklärung, II. p. 179.

³ Krit. Untersuchungen, p. 127; *Zeller's Jahrbücher*, 1847, p. 99.

⁴ Die Evangelien, p. 101.

⁵ *Baur*, ib. p. 127, Anm.

⁶ *Hilgenfeld*, Zeitschrift für wissenschaftliche Theologie, 1863, p. 84; *Das Leben Jesu für das deutsche Volk*, p. 249.

⁷ Luke xi. 49.

these sayings and doings of Jesus fall within the time of his final sojourn in Judea and Jerusalem.

This section of Luke's gospel is not by any means wanting in expressive signs and marks that serve to strengthen the probability of this supposition. The incident concerning Martha and Mary¹ carries us undoubtedly to Bethany, thus to the immediate vicinity of Jerusalem. The discourses against the Pharisees² were, as Matthew testifies,³ delivered in Jerusalem. The allusion to the violent proceedings of Pilate⁴ was most probably made when Jesus was in the capital at the last. The scene with the Pharisees,⁵ even according to the connection in Luke,⁶ could have taken place only in Jerusalem. The reference to Herod Antipas⁷ connects itself with the journeyings of Jesus in Judea before his last entry into Jerusalem.⁸ It is in this connection of thought that the citation of the lament over the city is grounded.⁹ The parable of the Supper also was uttered in Jerusalem or its neighbourhood.¹⁰ Those most pregnant parables¹¹ appear to belong to the same important juncture in the career of Jesus to which, undoubtedly, the eschatological discourses belong;¹² the parable of the Pharisee and the Publican evidently presupposes the presence of the temple.¹³ Accordingly it is a fact beyond dispute, that, before the Feast of the Passover at which the decisive blow was struck by his enemies, Jesus spent some length of time in Judea, visiting the capital several times, proclaiming there the kingdom of God,¹⁴ coming into violent collision with the Scribes and Pharisees,¹⁵ and thus at last rendering the breach with the hierarchical party irreparable.¹⁶ The lament over Jerusalem loses thus its perplexing character, even upon the supposition that Jesus sojourned in Judea only once and at the last. On the other hand, it is wholly inexplicable, if Jesus went repeatedly from Galilee to the Jewish festivals at Jerusalem, that the three synoptic gospels, *having their origin in Palestine*, should have had no knowledge of it. A public career of Jesus in Jerusalem in face of the temple, under the eyes of the High Jewish Council, in the very heart of the theocracy and seat of the reigning theological schools, would have been more noteworthy than his far more quiet labours in a remote district on the shores of the lake of Tiberias. Luke made use, not only of all the early sources extant in his time, but also of a number of later Judaic documents, and was it possible that not a single one of them should make the remotest allusion to the repeated visits of Jesus to the festivals at Jerusalem, or to his conflicts there with the leaders of the theocratic party, and his participation in the

¹ Luke x. 38-42.

⁴ Luke xiii. 1.

⁷ Luke xiii. 32.

¹⁰ Luke xiv. 7 *et seq.*, judging from Matt. xxii. 1.

¹³ Luke xvii. 22.

¹⁵ Matt. xxiii. 1.

² Luke xi. 37.

⁵ Luke xiii. 31.

⁸ Luke xix. 29.

¹¹ Luke xviii. 9.

¹⁶ Matt. xxiii. 37; Luke xiii. 34.

³ Matt. xxiii. 1.

⁶ Luke xiii. 33.

⁹ Luke xiii. 34.

¹² Luke xv. and xvi.

¹⁴ Luke xvii. 20.

festal solemnities of the people? We can easily understand how the prolonged abode of Jesus in Judea immediately preceding the final catastrophe in Jerusalem should recede in the memory of the primitive Christian body before the great events of those last few days. This accounts also for the confused way in which Luke has mixed up the original report of that sojourn in Judea with the last brief journey of Jesus through Samaria, and thus perplexed the readers of his gospel, learned and unlearned, up to the present day. There is an expression, moreover, preserved in the second gospel which shows that, before his last entry into Jerusalem, Jesus had *never* attended a festival there. According to the second gospel, Jesus, upon his arrival in the city, immediately betook himself to the temple, 'looked round about upon all things' (*περιβλεψάμενος πάντα*); so that until then he had never seen the edifice near at hand, which is inconsistent with the idea that he had attended the national festivals several times, and especially with the representation of the fourth gospel, which tells us of his having driven the traders from the temple at the very beginning of his career.

The third gospel is then the last written. Jerusalem was in ruins when the third Evangelist wrote his gospel. The beleaguering host of Rome was still before his mind,¹ yet some time must have passed since the horrors of the siege were enacted, for in his time Jerusalem was already trodden by the feet of the Gentiles. They had already established themselves in the city. The carrying off of captives into the Roman provinces was already an accomplished fact.² For this reason Luke starts from the supposition that between the destruction of Jerusalem and the coming of Christ there lay a considerable space of time, —the so-called 'times of the Gentiles' (*καιροὶ ἐθνῶν*)—an interval in which the Gentiles were to bear unlimited sway, until the last Judgment should come. It was in this time, according to his own statement, that the third Evangelist lived and composed his gospel. He did not therefore expect the 'immediate' coming of Christ,³ as the author of Matthew did, who wrote his gospel directly after the destruction of the Sanctuary. The Coming, according to Luke, is removed to an indefinite distance. However, to the third gospel there cannot well be assigned a later date than the year 80.⁴ The legendary element in it is more developed, but this gospel is substantially a credible evangelical writing, although drawn in part from secondary sources.

2. p. 28. In addition to what we have said in regard to the origin and historical credibility of the *fourth gospel*, we offer here some further observations. The objection that, if John be denied the authorship of this gospel, its historical credibility must also be given up, has been

¹ Luke xxi. 20.

² Luke xxi. 25.

³ Luke xxi. 24.

⁴ Luke xxi. 32.

met, we think, in what we have already said. The evangelical history is sufficiently authenticated by the Synoptics, even if the fourth gospel had to be rejected as an historical work. On the other hand, if this gospel be considered an apostolic writing of unqualified historical value, then the synoptical tradition, in the most essential points, becomes untrustworthy and useless. What the fourth gospel would gain in respect of historical credibility, the Synoptics would lose.

The differences between the first three gospels and the fourth gospel are not of a merely secondary, but of an essential character. In regard to these differences in the representations of the evangelical history, it is a very poor consolation to see with *Bleek* a similar difference in the representations of the person and teachings of Socrates, as given by Plato and Xenophon.¹ In the case of the Synoptics and the fourth gospel we have not merely different modes of conceiving of and estimating the personal character of Jesus, but representations of him springing from directly opposite suppositions. The first three gospels place before us a life of Jesus, which *developes itself* before our eyes: Jesus has to pass through a series of temptations, has to overcome in inner conflicts, and even in the last critical hours of his life it is not entirely clear to him whether or not it be the will of his Father that he should crown his work with suffering and death. The first three gospels lay the scene of the activity of Jesus, except at the close, in Galilee, and know of only one sojourn of Jesus in Judea. They describe his position towards the Old Testament law as originally not hostile, or even opposed. It is not the 'Jews' as such, but only the Scribes and Pharisees, the heads of the theocratic party, who are described by the Synoptics as the enemies and persecutors of Jesus. In the Synoptics Jesus speaks, never as a speculative, cultivated thinker, in sentences dark, abrupt, hard to understand, and moulded in accordance with a certain system of doctrine, but always as a true man of the people, in pithy, concise sayings, deep and yet luminous, and especially in similitudes. He designates himself emphatically the 'son of man.' A long time elapses before he proclaims himself, or rather allows himself to be proclaimed, in the circle of the Twelve as the Messiah. And it is yet longer before his disciples rightly appreciate his Messianic destiny; they obtain really no clear insight into his aims and into the nature of the kingdom of God, founded by him, until after his death.

The fourth gospel, on the contrary, starts, as has been remarked, from an essentially different view of the facts. It presents us with a representation of the life of Jesus in which there is *no development*. According to this account, Jesus had no temptations to withstand, no inner conflicts to meet; and as to what was the will of his Heavenly Father, he was perfectly clear in himself from first to last. He had foreknowledge of his sufferings and death from the very outset of his public life;

¹ Einl. in das N. T. p. 195.

he knew that his body and blood would be the life of the world. Before he had become to any extent known in Galilee, he betook himself to the very central seat of the theocracy, to Jerusalem, and there, in cleansing the temple of the traders, ventured upon a deed so bold that one is at a loss to understand how he could undertake such an act at the very beginning of his public work, and how he could do it unpunished under the very eyes of the magistracy and guardians of the temple. According to the fourth gospel, he was only questioned by the Jews as to how he could justify so bold a proceeding; this was all the opposition which he encountered. He travels repeatedly from Galilee to the festivals in Jerusalem and back. Of his labours in Galilee, however, very little is said in the fourth gospel. He shows himself entirely alienated from the Old Testament law, looks upon the 'Jews' as, without qualification, foes and persecutors, and even as children of the Devil. His utterances are thoughtful, but dark and even enigmatical, not at all of a popular character. They must have been unintelligible to the multitude, to whom, according to the first three gospels, he addressed himself almost exclusively. He seldom speaks in parables, reveals his glory at once,¹ designates himself the son of God,² is instantly acknowledged as the suffering Redeemer by the Baptist, and by his disciples as the Messiah, and at an early period makes himself known as such to the Samaritans.³

These general features present differences which point to an essentially different background of facts in the fourth gospel from that in the first three gospels, and if any certain and well-founded conclusion is to be arrived at, it is this: if the synoptic representation of the evangelical history be the correct one, then that of the fourth gospel is not correct, and *vice versa*. Where a difference so sharply marked exists, to talk of 'worn-out arguments,' and to stigmatize those who, through a conscientious examination of facts, and after weighing all the circumstances of the case, have been led to the conclusion that the first three gospels are more worthy of credit than the fourth, as men 'who are seeking to wrest his gospel from the Apos'tle, and its original evangelical jewel from the Church,'⁴ is to use the language, not of unprejudiced criticism and earnest scientific inquiry, but of an affected zealotism that dishonours the principles and spirit of Protestantism.

The *external* evidences as to the origin of the fourth gospel are not decisive. They are not decidedly unfavourable to the authorship of John, but neither are they so favourable that it can rest with certainty upon them alone. That this gospel was already known among those who were inclined to Gnosticism, in the first half of the second century, probably soon after the year 120, may be accepted with tolerable confidence. *Hippolytus* quotes from *Basilides* John i. 9, and John ii. 4;⁵

¹ John ii. 11.² John iii. 16.³ John iv. 26, 42.⁴ *Meyer*, Vorrede zur 4. Aufl. seines ex. Handbuchs über das Evangel. Joh.⁵ *Philosophumena*, VII. 22, 27.

but whether these quotations are really from Basilides, and not from his pupils,¹ cannot now be decided. However this may be, that John wrote this gospel cannot by any means be proved by these quotations.² From the fact that the Alexandrian Gnostics were acquainted with this gospel about the years 120–130, we can only infer that it was written at least some years earlier (110–120). The reason why it so soon found more general acceptance among them is to be found in its speculative character, akin to Gnosticism. It is very remarkable, on the other hand, that *Papias*, although so near (in Hierapolis) to the origin of the gospel, does not even mention it,³ while he quotes passages from the first epistles of John and Peter.⁴ Still more remarkable is it, that although in the epistle of *Polycarp* to the Philippians the Synoptics are often referred to,⁵ the fourth gospel, which, as a work of the Apostle John, would have had a special value in the eyes of Polycarp, is never mentioned. Whether *Justin Martyr* knew of the fourth gospel cannot be concluded with any certainty from quotations such as *καὶ γὰρ ὁ Χριστὸς εἶπεν· ἂν μὴ ἀναγεννηθῇτε, οὐ μὴ εἰσέλθῃτε εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν τῶν οὐρανῶν, κ.τ.λ.*⁶ Still less can it be concluded from 2 Peter i. 14 that reference is there made to John xxi. 18.

Not until the end of the second century was the fourth gospel generally received, with the other three gospels, as a work of the Apostle John. *Irenæus* stands as the first competent witness of this recognition (Theophilus of Antioch cannot be so regarded). It must, however, excite some astonishment that such distinguished inquirers as *Lücke*⁷ and *Bleek*⁸ should allow so much weight to this testimony. It is evident how little critical care *Irenæus* used in his statements in regard to the literature of the gospels, and how very much he was swayed, with regard to the Gnostics, by apologetic and polemical considerations. He has not the slightest doubt that the Apostle Matthew wrote the first gospel in Hebrew at the time that Peter and Paul laboured together in Rome.⁹ And yet there is now no result of biblical criticism more certain than that the first gospel was *not* written by the Apostle Matthew, and that Peter never laboured in Rome together with Paul. So likewise the report of *Irenæus* that Mark did not write his gospel until *after the death* of both those Apostles, has in itself no probability. Neither is his statement any more worthy of credit that Luke put into writing the gospel preached by Paul, the introduction to Luke's gospel directly contradicting this

¹ Comp. *Zeller*, Theol. Jahrbücher, 1853, p. 144 *et seq.* *Baur*, ib. 1854, p. 269, &c.

² Comp. *Hilgenfeld*, Die Evangelien, p. 345, Anm. 5.

³ Euseb. Hist. Eccles. III. 40.

⁴ See *Zeller*, Theol. Jahrb., 1847, p. 148 *et seq.*

⁵ *Dressel*, Patr. Ap. Op. p. 378 (see ch. ii., vi., vii.).

⁶ See Matt. xviii. 3; Hom. Clem. XI. 26; Just. Mart. Apol. I. 61.

⁷ Commentar über das Ev. d. Joh. I. p. 73.

⁸ Einl. in das N. T. p. 22.

⁹ Adv. Haer. III. 1.

assertion. Hence what *Irenæus* says in regard to the Apostle John being the author of the fourth gospel is deserving of *no more* weight than what he tells us of the authors and origin of the other gospels. He has stated explicitly the particular reason why the addition of a fourth canonical gospel to the first three gospels seemed to him indispensable. It was, he considers, a high (dogmatic) necessity. With incredible *naïveté*¹ he says that there could not be *either more or less* than four gospels, because there must be just as many gospels as there are quarters of the world, as there are principal winds, and as there are Cherubim. Nay, he seeks to prove from a passage in the Psalms² that He who dwells between the Cherubim must have four gospels, or rather a 'gospel of four aspects' (*τετράμορφον εὐαγγέλιον*), corresponding to the four faces of the Cherubim. The gospel of John, *Irenæus* esteemed the lion's gospel, because in the proem the generation of the Logos from the Father is taught. 'The living creatures are four-faced' (*τετράμορφα τὰ ζῶα*), consequently 'the gospel must be four-faced' (*τετράμορφον καὶ τὸ εὐαγγέλιον*): such is the powerful argumentation of *Irenæus* in behalf of the apostolic origin of the collective gospels; and because he maintained that it must be so, he pronounced those theologians who accepted a greater or less number of canonical gospels ignorant men (*μάταιοι καὶ ἀμαθεῖς*), but especially wicked and without any idea of the gospel (*τολμηροὶ ἀθετοῦντες τὴν ἰδέαν τοῦ εὐαγγελίου*); they lay bare to the day their want of respect for the divine plan of salvation.³ *Lücke's* question, whether *Irenæus* would have recognized the fourth gospel as the work of John if it had not been so pronounced by an old tradition, answers itself, after the specimen which we have just given, without any great difficulty. In proving the apostolic and canonical dignity of the fourth gospel, *Irenæus* appeals, not to an old tradition, but to a dogmatic necessity that was to be met. Had there not been added to the first three gospels a fourth canonical gospel apostolically accredited, the divine plan of salvation would have been thrown into disorder, and the indispensable conformity of the Holy Scriptures to the divine order of the world and of nature disturbed. We do not see how *Bleek*⁴ draws from the reasoning of *Irenæus*, which seems to him 'singular and whimsical,' the conclusion that the conviction of the truth of these four gospels, and therefore of the genuineness of John's gospel, must have been fixed firmly in the consciousness of *Irenæus* and the Church of his day. On the contrary, *Irenæus* appears to have been led to the conviction of the 'genuineness' by his singular and whimsical dogmatic notions. The strongest historical evidences in favour of a fifth canonical gospel would have produced no effect upon his mind, as the Cherubim have not five but only four faces, and there are only four quarters of the globe, and only four

¹ Adv. Haer. III. 8.² Ps. lxxx. 1.³ Adv. Haer. III. 9.⁴ Einleitung in das Neue Testament, p. 232.

principal winds. So little did the Christianity of that period understand thorough investigation and historical criticism.

But Irenæus had besides a special cause for judging favourably of the fourth gospel. It was extremely welcome to him in his controversy with the Gnostics, and therefore the remark of *Lücke* is not correct, that the Antignosticism of Irenæus left him no mind for the Christian Gnosis, allied to the positive faith.¹ The fourth gospel furnished him with weapons for the refutation of the Dualism of Cerinthus; for, according to the poem of the fourth gospel, *the Logos itself became flesh*, while of the Cerinthian Gnostics it could be said: *Secundum nullam sententiam hæreticorum Verbum Dei caro factum est.*²

In examining and weighing the external evidences in regard to the origin of the fourth gospel, it must not pass unnoticed, that, at the beginning of the second century, the Synoptic gospels were *no longer able to meet the dogmatic want* of the Gentile-Christian world. A gospel like the fourth had become indispensable to the further development of the Christian doctrine, especially to the successful progress of the gospel in a humanly universal direction. The idea, growing more and more general, of the divine dignity of Christ, opened the door wide to the fourth gospel, and, as in the case of Irenæus, soon gave it the first rank among the gospels. Consequently, in determining the question of its genuineness, it is only the internal evidence that can prove decisive. To what we have already said on this point, we have to add the following considerations.

It is in the highest degree *improbable that the author of the fourth gospel was a native of Palestine, or that he was even a born Jew*. The belief that, in the divine plan of salvation, the first place was to be given to the Jewish nation above all others, was peculiar to the Christians of Jewish birth in the Apostolic age, and even Paul, the apostle who had most thoroughly divested himself of Jewish prejudices, held this opinion.³ But in the fourth gospel there is not a trace of such an idea. Jesus is there represented to have come not to the Jews alone, but to the world; the world is called his own,⁴ not the Jewish people, as some commentators suppose contrary to the evident connection, for, in the latter case, those to whom Jesus gave power to become sons of God⁵ could have been Jews only. The Jews, on the contrary, at once place themselves in opposition to Jesus,⁶ and those of them who believed⁷ did so merely from the love of the miraculous, so that Jesus could put no confidence in them. The preference which the Evangelist gives to the Samaritans⁸ is hard to explain from a Jewish-Christian stand-point, and the report that Jesus proclaimed himself the Messiah among the Samaritans at the very

¹ Commentar über das Ev. Joh. I. p. 73.

² Rom. i. 16; iii. 1, 31; ix. 1-5; xi. 1.

³ John i. 12.

⁴ John ii. 23.

⁵ Adv. Haer. III. 11, 3.

⁶ John i. 10, 11.

⁷ John ii. 18.

⁸ John iv. 5 *et seq.*

beginning of his career¹ is in direct opposition to the synoptic representation.² The remark that between the Jews and Samaritans there existed no intercourse,³ implying, according to the connection, that it was forbidden to a Jew travelling through Samaria to ask water of a Samaritan woman, shows a want of knowledge in the Evangelist of the relations really existing between the Jews and Samaritans in the time of Jesus. They were not upon terms of so much hostility. The polemical treatment of the manna of the Old Testament,⁴ held so sacred by the Jews that a golden pot of manna was kept in the Ark of the Covenant,⁵ would be something more than remarkable from a born Jew. Surprising indeed, coming from such an one, would be the declaration that the obscurity of the family of Jesus was a mark of his Messianic origin,⁶ conflicting, as it does, with the Jewish tradition of the time which looked for the Messiah to come from the family of David. Would a born Jew, having any knowledge of the Law, have quoted and applied a passage from the Law⁷ so incorrectly as is done by this Evangelist?⁸

The mistakes occurring in the fourth gospel show, as Baur has remarked,⁹ that its author was not a native of Palestine. There is no geographical evidence of the existence of a Bethany in Peræa, mentioned in this gospel as the sphere of the labours of the Baptist.¹⁰ Origen, in his Commentary on this passage, has resort to the violent expedient of reading Bethabara instead of Bethany. It is true, the Evangelist¹¹ gives the correct distance of the well-known Bethany from Jerusalem, but just because he was ignorant of the locality, he is not prevented at another time from placing it erroneously on the other side of the Jordan. Origen made the most minute inquiries on the spot, when not much more than a century had passed since the fourth gospel had been written. To suppose, with *Lücke*,¹² that in this time a whole district had disappeared, leaving no trace, is scarcely credible; and to suppose with *Bleek*¹³ an *accidental* error in transcribing, is the more inadmissible, as the same error could not possibly have been made by all the transcribers and preserved in all the copies. The mistake is explained only upon the supposition that the author of the gospel, not being a Jew, was unacquainted with the geographical situation of the place mentioned.

We have an instance of the same kind in the name of the place Sychar,¹⁴ for the usual name Sichem, the chief city of Samaria. The form Sychar for Sichem occurs nowhere else, and there are no sufficient grounds for the supposition that it was a nickname.¹⁵ When those who

¹ John iv. 26, 39.

² John vi. 31, 32.

³ John vii. 27.

⁴ John viii. 17.

⁵ John i. 28.

⁶ Commentar, p. 392.

⁷ John iv. 5.

⁸ Matt. x. 5.

⁹ Exod. xvi. 32; Heb. ix. 4.

¹⁰ Deut. xvii. 6; xix. 16.

¹¹ Kritische Untersuchungen, p. 331.

¹² John xi. 18.

¹³ Einl. in's N. T. p. 209.

¹⁴ With reference to Is. xxviii. 1; Sirach L. 27.

¹⁵ John iv. 9.

maintain the genuineness of this gospel resort in this instance also to a supposed corruption of the text or mispronunciation,¹ or, with *Meyer*, seize upon the idea that Sychar was a considerable city in the vicinity of Sichem,²—this is cutting the knot, not untying it. If the author of the fourth gospel were a Gentile-Christian, unacquainted with the geography of Palestine, the error explains itself. It is remarkable also, that neither Josephus nor any other writer of the time makes mention of a pool named Bethesda;³ and the allegorizing interpretation of the name of the pool of Siloam,⁴ which could be intended only for the Greek reader, indicates the culture of Alexandria rather than of Palestine. The repeated assertion that Caiaphas was High Priest the year that Jesus suffered (*ἀρχιερεὺς ὢν τοῦ ἐνιαυτοῦ ἐκείνου*),⁵ in connection with the episode of the hearing before Annas,⁶ leaves a doubt in candid minds whether the Evangelist did not connect with that assertion an annual change of the office of High Priest; and when *Meyer*⁷ remarks, on the other hand, that such a belief is not to be attributed even to a 'Pseudo-John,' we call to mind much greater mistakes made by the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews in regard to Jewish observances far more generally known.⁸ When, moreover, we consider further, how like a stranger the Evangelist speaks of the Jewish Feasts, which to a born Jew were as familiar as his own household affairs (*τὸ πάσχα τῶν Ἰουδαίων*,⁹) (*ἡ ἑορτὴ τῶν Ἰουδαίων*,¹⁰) (*ἡ ἑορτὴ τῶν Ἰουδαίων ἡ σκηνοπηγία*,¹¹) (*τὸ πάσχα τῶν Ἰουδαίων*,¹²) we are only confirmed in the supposition that he was not of Jewish descent.

Another and very considerable point is the difference between the Synoptics and the fourth gospel in regard to the day on which Jesus suffered death. So much is certain beyond all doubt, that if, according to the Synoptics, Jesus actually observed a formal Paschal Supper with his disciples on the evening of the 14th of the month Nisan and was crucified on the 15th; the fourth Evangelist, who represents Jesus as partaking of a 'supper' with his disciples on the 13th of Nisan, and suffering death on the Cross on the 14th, could not have been a partaker of the last Supper with Jesus, nor an eye-witness and one of the twelve. We have already given the reasons¹³ which render it very probable, in our view, that Jesus instituted 'the Lord's Supper' in connection with a Paschal Supper. The modern advocates of John's authorship, with the exception of a few who exhaust themselves in vain attempts to harmonize the different accounts, take sides with the fourth gospel in regard to the last Supper, and charge the Synoptics with an

¹ *Bleek*, Einl. in's N. T. p. 209.

² *Meyer*, ex. Handbuch, p. 160; see also *Ewald*, Jahrbücher, VIII. p. 255.

³ John v. 2.

⁴ John xi. 49, 51; xviii. 13.

⁵ Ex. Handbuch, p. 381.

⁶ John ii. 13.

⁷ John vii. 2.

⁸ John xi. 55.

⁹ John ix. 7.

¹⁰ John xviii. 13.

¹¹ Heb. ix. 4.

¹² John v. 1.

¹³ See ch. xxv.

error. They derive their reasons for so doing chiefly from the Jewish observance in regard to feast days. It certainly is not to be disputed that the observance of the 15th of Nisan was pretty nearly equal in sanctity with the observance of the Sabbath,¹ and therefore no business was permitted by the Jewish statute to be attended to on the 15th of Nisan. For this reason the statements of the Synoptics are pronounced to be hardly credible,² that the arrest of Jesus by armed men and his examination on the holy night, and his crucifixion, which must according to Jewish ideas have been looked upon as a desecration of the Sabbath, all took place on the 15th of Nisan. But if legal proceedings on Sabbath or Feast days against religious offenders were as inadmissible as *Bleek* maintains, how then do the authors of the Synoptics, *Palestinian Jews*, perfectly familiar with the Jewish statutes and usages of their time, happen to relate, as actual events, what was so inadmissible? How comes the *Palestinian* tradition to represent the condemnation and death of Jesus as taking place on the 15th of the month Nisan? How comes Mark, the primitive Evangelist, who obtained his information of the last events in the life of Jesus from Peter himself, to assign those events to the night of the 14th-15th of Nisan? The more carefully prepared the oldest documents were in their narrative of the last hours of Jesus, the more improbable is it that they could have erred upon such important points as the time of the institution of the Lord's Supper, the arrest, condemnation, and death of Jesus. If it be sought to explain the alleged error of the Synoptics by supposing that, in consequence of the 'certain position' that Jesus took at the institution of the Lord's Supper, towards the Paschal Lamb of the Old Testament, the idea might easily have been formed that he observed this supper on the same evening on which the Jews, according to their Law, ate the Paschal Lamb, then if it had been a fact well known that the Law forbade all legal proceedings on the Sabbath and Feast days, it would have prevented Palestinian narrators and born Jews from forming such an idea. But *Tholuck*³ and *Wieseler*⁴ have called attention to the fact that legal proceedings by Jews against Jews must have taken place not infrequently upon ordinary Sabbaths. There is no doubt that, according to the fourth gospel, the High Council determined on the Sabbath, which occurred during the Feast of Tabernacles,⁵ to arrest Jesus. Legal proceedings were taken against Jesus, also on a Sabbath, on account of his healing a blind man : ⁶ a formal, legal hearing in which especially the Pharisaic party of the High Council took part.⁷ Even

¹ Exod. xii. 16 ; Levit. xxiii. 7 ; Numb. xxviii. 18.

² *Bleek*, Beiträge zur Evangelienkritik, p. 130.

³ Commentar zu Joh. xiii. 1.

⁴ Chronolog. Synopse, p. 360.

⁵ John. vii. 32 ; *Bleek*, ib. p. 140 ; *Wieseler*, ib. pp. 329, 361.

⁶ John ix. 13.

⁷ John ix. 15.

on that last day of the Feast of Tabernacles,¹ which was observed like a Sabbath, an order was issued for the arrest of Jesus and a sitting of the Sanhedrim was held.² In like manner during the Feast of Dedication, a similar order was issued and an attempt made to seize Jesus.³ A report of the same kind is found in the Synoptics, which tells us that, in consequence of a cure performed by Jesus on the Sabbath, his theocratic opponents instantly, on the Sabbath, held a council how they might destroy him.⁴ It is thus sufficiently proved that the later enactment of the Talmudical law, forbidding courts of law to sit on the Sabbath, had not attained to any authority in the time of Jesus, or was not observed with the strictness of later times. At any rate an exception was made in the case of *offences against religion and the theocratic law*, and even the execution of persons convicted of such crimes took place *on feast days*.⁵ We cannot attach any great significance to the marks which, according to *Bleek*, the Synoptics themselves show, that Jesus was crucified on the 14th of the month Nisan.⁶ Certainly, according to Luke,⁷ the women, upon their return from the grave of Jesus, prepared their spices that evening, and rested in obedience to the Law the next day, which was the usual Sabbath. But it is Mark who tells the story correctly.⁸ He tells us that not until the Sabbath was over did the women buy their sweet spices. The Gentile-Christian Luke has, in his representation, fallen into an error respecting the Jewish observance of the Sabbath. In the circumstance that Simon of Cyrene⁹ is described as 'coming from the country' evidence has been sought to prove that he had been at work in the fields, and consequently that it must have been a work-day. But one could have been passing by and coming from the country on a holy day, without having been engaged in field-labour. Why the 15th of Nisan should not have been designated as the 'preparation day' (*παρασκευή*)¹⁰ by a *Christian* narrator is the less easy to perceive, as among the early Christians, as is well known, the day of the Crucifixion was for a considerable time distinguished as 'the great' (*μεγάλη*) or 'holy day of preparation' (*ἁγία παρασκευή*).

But recently a circumstance has been brought into notice which goes against the supposition that the Apostle John considered the 14th of Nisan as the day on which Jesus died. And yet such must have been his belief, if he were the author of the fourth gospel. There arose, as is known, about the year 160 a difference of opinion between the Asiatic and Roman Christians as to the point of time at which the last Paschal Supper observed by Jesus should be commemorated. The

¹ Levit. xxiii. 35.

² John vii. 37.

³ John x. 22, 39.

⁴ Mark iii. 6; Matt. xii. 14; Luke vi. 11.

⁵ Tr. Sanhedrim, XI. 4; *Wieseler*, ib. p. 363.

⁶ Beiträge, p. 136; Einl. in's N. T. p. 184.

⁷ Luke xxiii. 56.

⁸ Mark xv. 47; xvi. 1.

⁹ Mark xv. 21; Luke xxiii. 26.

¹⁰ Mark xv. 42; Matt. xxvii. 62; Luke xxiii. 54.

Christians in proconsular Asia celebrated this occasion on the evening of the 14th of the month Nisan, and for the reason that Jesus had on that evening eaten the Passover with his disciples. Hence they were called *Quartodecimani* (τεσσαρεσκαιδεκαριται). In Rome, on the other hand, *Friday of the Festal week* was observed as the day of Christ's death (*dies paschae*) without regard to the day of the month. In the year 160 the difference became a subject of controversy between *Polycarp* of Smyrna, who defended the Eastern observance, and *Anicetus*, Bishop of Rome, without the question being settled, but also without disturbing the amicable relations of the two Churches. In the year 170 the dispute was renewed among the Churches of Asia Minor themselves; and in the year 190 the Roman Bishop Victor required the bishops of Asia Minor to give up the celebration of the 14th of Nisan, and when they would not comply with the requisition, he pronounced them 'heretics,' and excluded them from Church fellowship.

There is a difference of opinion as to what the object of the Asiatic observance of the 14th of Nisan was. According to a fragment in the Paschal chronicle of Apollinaris, bishop of Hierapolis,—who, as it seems, had been won over by Rome to the observance there established, and who in Asia Minor had stood up in opposition to the Asiatic celebration,—the motive for the observance appears to have been a sacred regard for the *particular day of Jesus' death*. As Jesus had eaten the Paschal Lamb with his disciples on this day of the month (the 14th),¹ the Churches of Asia Minor thought themselves bound to follow herein the precedent set by Jesus. Thus the cause of the prevailing observance lay not so much in the desire to follow *the Jewish statute*, as in a determination to hold fast to the primitive Christian commemoration of the last Paschal Feast kept by Jesus with his disciples. It is in this way that *Eusebius* regards the matter in dispute when he derives the Asiatic observance 'from older tradition' (ἐκ παραδόσεως ἀρχαιοτέρας);² it was celebrated as 'the Paschal feast of the Saviour' (ἡ τοῦ σωτηρίου πάσχα ἑορτή), as the Passover which the Saviour himself had kept with his disciples the evening before his death. The Fast then appears to have been kept, according to the Asiatic practice, only till the evening of the 14th of Nisan, while, according to the Roman custom, it did not end until the dawn of Easter morning.

Looking at the dispute merely on the external, *historical* side, we conclude that the Asiatics had the right of the question in so far as they held inviolably to the *day* of the month on which Jesus kept the last Paschal Supper. But after the year 170 the question appears to have taken a *dogmatico*-ritual colouring. According to the representa-

¹ Chron. Pasch. ed. Dindorf, I. p. 14; ὅτι τῇ ἰδ' τὸ πρόβατον μετὰ τῶν μαθητῶν ἔφαγεν ὁ κύριος.

² Hist. Eccles. V. 26.

tion in Eusebius, the controversy turned mainly on the point, on what day of Passion Week the Fast, *i.e.* the expression of the Church's mourning for sin, should end, and the sacred festal jubilee, the expression of joy at the reconciliation and redemption effected by the death of Christ, should begin. In regard to this point, Eusebius appeals to the apostolic tradition: ὡς μὴδ' ἑτέρα προσήκειν παρὰ τὴν τῆς ἀναστάσεως τοῦ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν ἡμέραι (ἡμέρα) τὰς νηστείας ἐπιλύεσθαι, *i.e.* that the Fast, according to the custom, never terminated until the dawn of Easter morning. At this point the subject in dispute struck deeper, for the question was no less than, whether *the celebration of the Lord's Supper* were at the same time the celebration of the victory of Jesus over sin and death, *i.e.* whether the festal jubilee of the redeemed might and should resound on the 14th of Nisan, or whether the victory had been first won by the resurrection of Jesus, and hence might and should be celebrated only with the dawn of Easter?

The question thus brought into consideration was the significance of the observance of the Lord's Supper instituted by Jesus on the 14th of Nisan, and, as closely connected therewith, the religious dignity of the day on which the institution took place. A decisive conclusion of the controversy could certainly be arrived at only upon *historical* grounds. It depended above all things upon *the design of the Lord* himself in the institution, but this could be ascertained—according to the views of that day—only from *apostolic tradition*. And therefore Polycrates bishop of *Ephesus*, in a letter addressed in the name of the Asiatic bishops to Victor bishop of Rome, appeals to the *testimony of the Apostle John* to prove that the 14th of Nisan (ἡ ἡμέρα ὅταν ὁ λαὸς ἤρπυε τὴν ζύμην) had been solemnly observed in uninterrupted succession from the time of the apostles.¹ Thus the 14th of Nisan was, in his belief, the day appointed by God for the Christian Paschal Feast, and, according to the well-known apostolic declaration, one must obey God rather than men. *Irenæus*, who in this controversy was on the side of the Roman Church, but disapproved of Victor's passionate treatment of the question, acknowledged, in a letter addressed in the name of the Gallican Church to Victor, that the Asiatic Churches stood on the ground of apostolic tradition (he designates them as ἐκκλησίας τοῦ ἀρχαίου ἔθους παράδοσιν ἐπιτηρούσας), and that on account of ritual differences Church communion ought not to be denied them. But he indicated the point in dispute more sharply than had been done previously, when he declared that the difference in question was not only the day of observance (whether the 14th of Nisan or not), but also the duration of the Fast observed in Passion Week (περὶ τοῦ εἶδους αὐτοῦ τῆς νηστείας). The Asiatic Christians fasted during a shorter time than the Roman, probably only on the day preceding the observ-

¹ Euseb. Hist. Eccles. V. 27.

ance of the Lord's Supper, the Paschal Feast (*οἱ μὲν γὰρ οἴονταί μιν ἡμέραν δεῖν αὐτοῖς ἡσθεύειν*,—where the *οἱ μὲν* are, according to the connection, most probably the Asiatics). While Irenæus reminded Bishop Victor of the friendly and peaceful way in which his predecessor, Anicetus, dealt with Polycarp of Smyrna in reference to the same subject, he testified also at the same time to the fact that Polycarp had held firmly to the Asiatic custom, *and indeed by the authority of the Apostle John and the other Apostles.*

This Asiatic observance cannot possibly have been what *Bleek* represents it, when he supposes that the Asiatic communities took part in the 'celebration of a Jewish Passover'—so far as it was kept at a distance from the temple, and after its destruction—by substituting meals in common for the Paschal meal strictly so called.¹ This would not have been a *Christian, but a Jewish* celebration; and it is enough to state, in opposition to this view, that Eusebius calls the Passover upon which the controversy turned, 'the Saviour's Paschal Feast' (*ἡ τοῦ σωτηρίου πάσχα ἱερή*); that Polycrates of Ephesus remarks, in reference to the same, that the Asiatics had always celebrated the Passover on the 14th of the month Nisan 'according to the Gospel' (*κατὰ τὸ εὐαγγέλιον*), i.e. as a *Christian* ceremony; and that finally, also according to Irenæus, the cardinal point of the controversy was the duration of the Fast.

Now, as to the connection of the Paschal controversy with the question concerning the origin of the fourth gospel, the important fact is that the 14th of the month Nisan was undoubtedly observed by the Asiatic Churches as the day of the institution of the Lord's Supper by Jesus, consequently, the 15th was considered as the day on which Jesus died;—a fact also made conspicuous, as the characteristic distinction of the Asiatic celebration, by Apollinaris of Hierapolis in the first fragment of the Paschal Chronicle.² It is equally beyond dispute that the Apostle John was regarded as the most important witness in defence of this celebration of the Feast, and that men like Polycarp of Smyrna, who were personal pupils and admirers of the apostle, appealed especially to his authority, and would have considered it a sin against God himself, i.e. against what was divinely instituted, to depart from this apostolic rite. How is it to be explained that an apostle, who solemnly distinguished the 14th of Nisan as the commemoration-day of the institution of the Lord's Supper by Jesus, and held the 15th to be the day of the Crucifixion, should nevertheless write a gospel in which there is no mention of the institution of the Lord's Supper, and in which it is assumed that the 14th was the day on which Jesus died? To meet this grave contradiction, *Bleek* has nothing to offer but a supposition no less irreconcilable with the original reports (as we have shown) than improbable in itself,—namely, that the Asiatic

¹ Einl. in's N. T., p. 190.

² *Weitzel*, Die christliche Paschafeier, p. 22 *et passim*.

Christians kept on the 14th of Nisan a *Jewish* Passover, and that at this celebration the commemoration of the Last Supper of the Lord (as is self-evident) was for a considerable length of time (but how long?) not at all the main point in view. *Bleek* is further of opinion that, although John knew that Jesus did not partake of the last meal with his disciples at the time legally appointed for the Jewish Passover, yet this circumstance could not induce John to make himself an exception to what had come to be the custom. But the Apostle John was not by any means an ordinary member of the Christian body, who simply conformed to the prevailing practice. He was looked up to by the Churches of Asia Minor as a supreme apostolic authority. He was their model and leader. He could not possibly have left them in uncertainty upon a point so important as the day of the institution of the Lord's Supper and of the death of Jesus. If he felt himself moved in his gospel to contradict in writing, indirectly at least, the statement of the Synoptics, it is more than improbable that he would have omitted to instruct by word of mouth the Churches under his apostolic charge in regard to the error that had crept in among them. And who so well able to give such instruction as he, the eyewitness and partaker of the first Lord's Supper? And finally, how is the participation of the Apostle John in a *Jewish* Passover to be reconciled, if he were the author of the fourth gospel, with the so decidedly *anti-Jewish* character of this gospel?

It is only in case the learned and acute exposition of *Steitz* can be maintained,¹ according to which the Churches of Asia Minor commemorated the death of Jesus on the 14th of Nisan as the *true Christian* Passover,² that the representation of the fourth gospel could possibly be reconciled with the authorship of John. But we gather from the original reports in the most explicit manner that the Asiatic Christians were really of opinion that Jesus kept the Jewish Paschal Supper with his disciples on the evening of the 14th of Nisan. We do not see, moreover, why the Roman Christians could have taken offence at the Asiatic Church for sacredly observing the day of Christ's death.³

But if Jesus really kept the Paschal Supper on the evening of the 14th of Nisan with his disciples, the question remains: why did the author of the fourth gospel, in contradiction to the Synoptics and the Asiatic observance, put the Last Supper on the evening of the 13th and the Crucifixion on the 14th? That the statement of mere outward events was not this Evangelist's chief aim, we have already shown. He gives the discourses of Jesus in a form in which they could not have been uttered. He represents Jesus as quitting Galilee at the commence-

¹ Studien und Kritiken, 1855, p. 716 *et seq.*; 1856, p. 721; *Herzog's* Real-Encyclopädie, Art. Pascha.

² 1 Cor. v. 7.

³ *Zeller*, Theol. Jahrbücher, 1849, p. 209; 1857, p. 523; *Hilgenfeld*, Der Paschasstreit, p. 5.

ment of his career, and choosing Judea as the scene of his labours, which goes against the Synoptics and against all probability. He places the purification of the temple at the beginning of the public life of Jesus, whereas it undoubtedly belongs to the close. He represents the disciples as recognizing in Jesus, at first sight, the Messiah and a manifestation of the Divine Logos, whereas a considerable period elapsed before they attained to any high appreciation of the significance of the person of Jesus and of his mission. The representation of the fourth gospel departs throughout from that of the other Evangelists. Now, although the fourth Evangelist differs from the three others in reference to the day of the death of Jesus, this in itself is not very remarkable. He has dogmatic aims to serve. His special object is to ground his readers in the belief that Jesus as the Christ, the son of God, was the manifestation of the Logos in the flesh, and through this belief to plant the life eternal in the Christian community.¹ The author of the fourth gospel evidently appears to have taken the same dogmatic point of view as Apollinaris of Hierapolis in the Paschal Chronicle, when he designates Christ as the true Passover, and his death on the cross as the true Paschal sacrifice, and thus sees in Christ's death the actual fulfillment of one of the most important types of the Old Testament.² In the words of Apollinaris, quoted below, there is expressed the same sharp opposition to Judaism which runs through the whole fourth gospel. Jesus could not, from such a point of view, have kept a Paschal Supper properly so called, as he would then have been virtually making confession, before his death, of Judaism; Jewish types, circumcision and the Passover, have, in the moment of their true fulfillment through his all-consummating death,³ no longer any significance either for him or for Christians. If he was himself on the cross the real Paschal Lamb, he could not have solemnly partaken of a typical one before his death on the cross. From this point of view, the idea that Jesus celebrated with his disciples a Jewish Passover just before his death certainly appeared to the fourth Evangelist as a dogmatic impossibility; and hence his representation is but the offspring of an unavoidable dogmatic necessity, requiring Jesus in his last hours to be represented as wholly free from Jewish prejudices. How anxious the Evangelist was to give his readers the impression that Jesus suffered as the true Paschal Lamb, is proved by the importance which he attaches to the circumstance that, after the Crucifixion, not a bone in the body of Jesus was broken.⁴ Thus in him was fulfilled the requirement in regard to the true Paschal Lamb; ⁵ from the stand-point of Scripture, there could no longer be any doubt that he was the true Messiah, the fulfiller

¹ John xx. 31.

² See the Chron. Paschale, ib.: ἡ ἰδ' τὸ ἀληθινὸν τοῦ κυρίου πάσχα, ἡ θυσία ἡ μεγάλη, ὁ ἀντὶ τοῦ ἀμνοῦ παῖς θεοῦ ὁ δεθεὶς, ὁ δέσας τὸν ἰσχυρὸν, . . . καὶ ὁ ταφεὶς ἐν ἡμέρᾳ τῇ τοῦ πάσχα.

³ John xix. 30.

⁴ John xix. 33.

⁵ Exod. xii. 46.

of the Old Covenant.¹ But there was in Jesus something more than in the merely typical lamb of the Old Covenant. In the mention, made by the fourth Evangelist, of the blood and water that flowed from the dead body of Jesus upon its being pierced by the spear, he intends doubtless to point to one of the greatest miracles wrought for the glorification of Jesus; on which account the commentators might spare themselves both the natural explanations of this circumstance and the medical dissertations, down even to the suggillations and extravasations of Dr. Ebrard.² Blood and water, i. e. the blood of the crucified Jesus and the water of baptism, are the two means of grace by which, according to the Evangelist, salvation is brought about under the New Covenant. Whosoever eats the flesh of the son of man and *drinks his blood* has eternal life,³ and whosoever *has drunk of the water* which he gives will never thirst again.⁴ Thus the belief that Jesus suffered death as the true Lamb of the Passover on the 14th of Nisan serves, not only to make him appear to fulfill the Old Testament types, consummating the Divine plan of salvation within its historical development, and thus to establish the conviction of his Messianic destination, but also to call to mind the means of grace, the blood of reconciliation, and the water of purification,⁵ by which the death of Jesus is rendered effectual in believers. The Christian school, in which the fourth gospel had its origin, and which was in unmistakable connection with the doctrinal ideas of the Apostle John, had, in regard to the significance of the death of Jesus, forsaken the purely *historical* stand-point of the apostle. The pupils had gone beyond their master. That historical interests had to yield to dogmatic views was in accord with the tendency of the age which followed upon that of the apostles. The great object then was to establish and maintain at any price a full faith in the son of God and his essential Godhead. And in the fire of enthusiasm which this faith kindled, the objections and demurs of historical criticism, which was as yet little developed, were consumed.

The conclusion to which our investigation plainly points is this: Mark is the most authentic source of the evangelical history, while Matthew and Luke contain amplifications and variations attributable to the later tradition, and the fourth Evangelist subordinates the historical to the dogmatic interest. For the predominance of the *legendary element* even in the *second* gospel, notwithstanding its connection with the discourses of Peter, a twofold cause is at hand: 1. Mark freely elaborated the discourses of Peter, and wrote his gospel under the influence of the apostolic tradition orally delivered and of the demand for the marvellous in the apostolic community, and Peter himself, following Old Testament precedents, may have set many of the evangelical occurrences in a miraculous light.—2. The elaborator of the Primitive

¹ John xix. 36.² Wissenschaftliche Kritik, 2. A., p. 563.³ John vi. 54.⁴ John iv. 14.⁵ See also Baur, Krit. Untersuchungen, p. 215 *et seq.*

Mark has likewise here and there mingled later ideas with the earlier reports. In what particular instances this has been done, cannot now be determined with any precision.

8. p. 39. The account in Luke¹ of the first visit of Jesus, in his boyhood, to the temple, is regarded by *Strauss*² and others as a myth. *Strauss* admits, it is true, that the journey of Jesus to Jerusalem at twelve years of age, his eagerness to learn, and his interest in the temple, are not in themselves improbable. But as, according to Jewish ideas, the twelfth year marked a new period in the life of man, and as, when there is no authentic historical evidence at hand in regard to the early signs of greatness in great men, fictitious stories of their youth are apt to go abroad, and as, finally, the evangelical narrator represents the parents of Jesus as not understanding what he meant in his reference to his Father's house—*Strauss* decides the whole story to be a fiction. *Weisse*, too, considers himself bound to confess,³ that he cannot understand this narrative save as a myth; for to give such an answer to his parents,⁴ either the natural laws of human development must have been dispensed with in the case of Jesus, or he must have caught the idea of the Messianic calling in a light, childish way. *Hilgenfeld* finds in that answer not simply the idea of the divine Sonship, but the divine Sonship as the essential point of the answer, and in its superhuman character, in opposition to the consciousness of Jesus as a human son.⁵ *Ernest Renan* throws the narrative back into the region of the legendary.⁶ With reference to such representations *Hase* has justly remarked⁷ that, although the incident is not vouched for by apostolic testimony, yet it makes on the reader the full impression of historical truth. Luke himself without doubt took the narrative, so free from all marvellous exaggerations, from some written work of the older tradition.⁸ For the later tradition would not have failed to amplify and ornament it with miraculous embellishments. The assertion of *Strauss*, that, because tradition now and then mixes up with the early history of great men fabulous accounts of signs and presentiments of greatness, the narrative of Luke showing such an indication in Jesus must be a fable, goes too far, especially since, according to the admission of *Strauss*, such fictions appear only when the means of tracing historical truth are wanting. That the historical truth of the occurrence in the temple synagogue cannot be traced, *Strauss* has not attempted to show. The several features of the

¹ Luke ii. 41.

² *Ev. Geschichte*, I., p. 212.

³ *Die Evangelien*, p. 169.

⁴ *Vie de Jésus*, p. 42. He remarks in this relation: 'La légende se plaît à le montrer dès son enfance en révolte contre l'autorité paternelle et sortant des voies communes pour suivre sa vocation.'

⁵ *Leben Jesu*, 4. A., p. 57.

⁶ *Leben Jesu*, § 36.

⁷ Luke ii. 49.

⁸ Luke i. 2.

narrative are characterized by an artless simplicity: the questions of the child Jesus, manifesting the desire for knowledge, the astonishment of the teachers, the pain and anxiety of the parents, the assurance with which Jesus bears himself—all is genuinely human. There is no trace in what Jesus said of anything like a consciousness of superhuman Sonship, in opposition to his consciousness of being the child of human parents. Like any other pious Jewish child, he calls God his Father, but he renders to his earthly parents the obedience which was their due.

4. p. 49. According to the common acceptation John really recognized and acknowledged Jesus as the Messiah, and, as *Neander* thinks,¹ in consequence 'of a subjective revelation of the Divine Spirit intended expressly for John.' Neander thus regards the account of the synoptical gospels as a fabulous embellishment: that which John declared to be a fact real only to himself became objective, shaped itself into an external occurrence, when related by others. According to our view, the later legend, on the contrary, spiritualizes the facts of tradition. From Neander's point of view, it is, historically considered, inexplicable how the Baptist should have at once pronounced Jesus—who, until that moment, was wholly unknown to him—to be the Messiah.² If this was the effect of an instantaneous, psychologically immediate, divine revelation, it is unintelligible that the impression of this illumination should have been so slight that, at a later period, John lost all recollection of it.³ It is equally unaccountable why, after such a vision had been accorded him, he did not at once cease from preaching the necessity of repenting and fasting, and begin to announce the importance of embracing the salvation which had appeared in the person of Jesus. No apologist has as yet solved the psychological enigma, namely, how it happened that John directed others to Jesus as the fulfilment of the Old Testament promises, but held fast himself to the Old Testament idea, and kept his own disciples upon the stand-point which, he declared, had been superseded. The fine historical sense of Neander has recognized the weight of this difficulty,⁴ but not in the least degree met it by the suggestion that John had taken his appointed stand, beyond which he did not feel free to advance, and had he attached himself to Jesus, there would have been nothing gained thereby for the cause of Jesus. The enigma is essentially of a psychological nature, and has nothing to do with a scheme of salvation. If, whether by an outward miracle, or by an inner illumination, John had become convinced of the Messianic calling of Jesus, and if, for the purpose of interesting others in the cause of Jesus, he made a public declaration of his conviction, then, neither in relation to his external activity nor to his inner life, was there any reason why he should keep himself and

¹ *Leben Jesu Christi*, p. 83 *et seq.*

² *Matt. xi. 2*; *Luke vii. 18*,

³ *John i. 33*.

⁴ *Neander, ib. p. 85.*

his disciples aloof from Jesus. His so acting could not be of use to Jesus and his cause, but would, on the contrary, have produced an unfavourable impression.

But it is in itself in a high degree improbable that John, with his ideas of the Messiah, should have discovered the marks of the Messiah in Jesus, who until then was wholly unknown to him. In the description of John given by Josephus, there is no direct allusion to the position of John towards the Messianic hopes of his countrymen; ¹ he is described as an honest man, who laboured as a teacher of virtue among the Jews, and by means of baptism pledged them to the practice of righteousness towards man and piety towards God; his baptism had accordingly not the significance of an expiation securing forgiveness (which was the popular idea of sacrifice), but of a symbol expressive of a moral pledge.²

But when Josephus further relates that a great popular excitement was caused by the preaching of John (*ἤμθησαν ἐπὶ πλείστον τῇ ἀκρόασει τῶν λόγων*), when he mentions the fear of Herod Antipas lest a revolt (*ἀποστασις*), an innovation (*νέωτερόν τι ἐξ αὐτοῦ*), a revolution (*μεταβολή*), might be produced by John, it is very natural to infer,³ that John announced the approach of the Messianic kingdom in a way that occasioned uneasiness in the Roman party.⁴ At the same time the statement of Josephus serves to show that John's expectation of the Messianic kingdom had a decided theocratic colouring. How then could he have recognized the Messiah in Jesus of Nazareth, unknown, unconnected with high and influential families, and without demur have proclaimed him as the Messiah to the people? Granting that it is on the one hand very probable that John connected with his baptism the idea of the approaching Messiah's kingdom, it is on the other hand just as unlikely that he went any further than is stated in the Book of Acts,⁵ according to which he baptized the people unto him, 'who should come after him' (*εἰς τὸν ἐρχόμενον μετ' αὐτόν*). That by 'him who was to come' Jesus was meant, is an addition, an interpretation of the Apostle Paul from his point of view as a Christian.

With still greater difficulties is the question embarrassed: Why did Jesus suffer himself to be baptized by John? *Ernest Renan* represents the relation in which the two stood to one another in such a light that Jesus had already founded his school before going to the Baptist,⁶ an idea which finds no support whatever, as *Renan* supposes it does, in John iii. 22.⁷ Besides, the first three gospels give a more correct

¹ Ant. XVIII. 5, 2.

² See the description of Josephus: *ὁβτω γὰρ καὶ τὴν βάπτισιν ἀποδεκτὴν αὐτῷ (θεῷ) φανείσθαι, μὴ ἐπὶ τινων ἀμαρτάνων παρατήσσει χρωμένον, ἀλλ' ἐφ' ἀγνείᾳ τοῦ σώματος, ὅτε δὴ καὶ τῇ ψυχῇ δικαιοσύνη προεκκεκαθαρμένης.*

³ *E. Gerlach*, Die Weissagungen des A. T. in den Schriften des Josephus, p. 116.

⁴ Mark i. 7; Matt. iii. 8; Luke iii. 16.

⁵ Acts xix. 4.

⁶ Vie de Jésus, p. 104.

⁷ Comp. John i. 19 et seq.

account of the relation of Jesus to John than the fourth gospel. According to *Renan*, the two worked together as associates for a while,¹ and he even represents Jesus as for a time subordinate to John and as taking John for a model.² Upon this view, it certainly is very easy to understand how Jesus came to submit himself to the baptism of John. But *Renan's* representation lacks a solid scientific basis. There is not in the gospels the slightest intimation that Jesus ever joined the circle of John's disciples, and this notion *Renan* himself entirely refutes when he represents Jesus as of equal age with John, and as possessed of a profound originality of mind.

But other modern attempts to explain the baptism of Jesus by John have proved alike unsatisfactory. The supposition that, when Jesus was baptized, John's baptism was in the process of becoming Christian baptism, a vow and a Messianic dedication,³ finds no support in the original documents. And it is not clear why Jesus should have made a vow to John, who was less than the least in the kingdom of Heaven. Equally impossible is it, that he could by a formal act have been consecrated to his Messianic calling, as he had not then attained to any full clearness in regard to his calling. Granting even that John's baptism was designed to symbolize for all the people the inauguration of the Messianic age, and thus to serve as a formal dedication to the Messiah,⁴—which is not correct without qualification,—yet it was by no means requisite that the Messiah himself should observe this ceremony, and, least of all, such a Messiah as Jesus, whose mission it was to put an end to the whole fabric of Jewish formalities. *Baumgarten*⁵ and *Ewald*⁶ have come nearest to the right view of the baptism of Jesus; the former in bringing into view the pure love of Jesus, which moved him, in the consciousness of his humanity and nationality, to raise the nation from its sins and impurities to his own holiness; and the latter when he remarks that no true member of the community could, according to his higher obligation, keep aloof from the Baptist, not even he who should become, but was not yet the Messiah. Besides, the baptism of Jesus by John ceases to offend the Christian consciousness, when the later tradition representing it as connected with the forgiveness of sins is acknowledged to be untenable. As a true Israelite, as a faithful citizen and friend of his country, as a true man, as one of the people feeling profoundly with them, Jesus, without any violation of conscience, could unite with the better part of the people in confessing the general guilt, and bind himself to the service of righteousness and piety just as

¹ *Vie de Jésus*, p. 104: Les deux jeunes enthousiastes, pleins des mêmes espérances et des mêmes haines, ont bien pu faire cause commune et s'appuyer réciproquement.

² *Ib.*: Il semble que, malgré sa profonde originalité, Jésus, durant quelques semaines ou moins, fut l'imitateur (!) de Jean.

³ *Hase*, p. 85.

⁴ *Geschichte Jesu*, p. 43.

⁵ *Neander*, *ib.* p. 72.

⁶ *Geschichte Christus*, 2. A., p. 186.

well as afterwards, without offending his conscience, he could pray with his disciples: Forgive us *our sins, our debts*.¹

5. p. 60. One of the gravest problems in the evangelical history is, beyond all dispute, contained in the question: in what way did Jesus come to resolve upon public activity, and to choose his Messianic calling? Our mode of representing him rejects the usual supposition that Jesus formed a 'plan' of saving mankind, and followed it out in his work of redemption. *E. Renan* certainly goes much too far when he describes Jesus as entering upon his public life entirely without a project, and as invested by the admiring multitude with the title of Messiah.² But *Keim*³ has well remarked that the inner reality of Jesus' Messiahship cannot have been the birth of an hour, but must have been the 'growth of a life.' It is the special merit of *Ewald*,⁴ that he has seen this psychological development, although his preference for the fourth gospel has seriously embarrassed his understanding of it in detail. In the fourth gospel Jesus thinks and acts, from the first moment of his appearance in public, as the Messiah. In the first three gospels, on the other hand, there is no allusion to Jesus' Messiahship in connection with his announcement of the fulfillment of time and the coming of the kingdom of God. The appearance of Jesus, moreover, at the beginning of his public labours, showed none of the marks by which the Messiah was to be authenticated. People were astonished at his 'teaching,' but mainly for the convincing power that lay in it,⁵ and not because it met the popular Messianic expectations. The unclean spirit in Capernaum also addresses him simply by the title 'Jesus of Nazareth,' and designates him as a holy man of God.⁶ At a still later period in his career, his Messianic dignity was not generally recognized, but the people held him to be the Baptist risen from the dead, or one of the old prophets.⁷ And even the disciples themselves, according to the Synoptics, did not attain, until at a later period, and then to the surprise of Jesus, to a recognition of his Messianic calling.⁸

If, according to some passages in the Synoptics, Jesus was from the first acknowledged as the Messiah, there is only the more ground for the view taken by *Schneckenburger*, namely, that the representation in these passages has been obscured by tradition.⁹ With the recollection of the fact that Jesus proclaimed himself the Messiah only towards the close of his life there is connected the dogmatic aim of the reporters,

¹ Luke xi. 4; Matt. vi. 12.

² *Vie de Jésus*, pp. 133: Comme le Messie devait être fils de David, on lui décernait naturellement ce titre. . . . Jésus se le laissait donner avec plaisir, quoiqu'il lui causât quelque embarras (!).

³ *Keim*, *Die menschliche Entwicklung Jesu Christi*, p. 24.

⁴ *Geschichte Christus*, p. 146 *et seq.*

⁵ Mark i. 22; Matt. vii. 28; Luke iv. 32.

⁶ Mark i. 23; Luke iv. 34.

⁷ Mark viii. 27; Matt. xvi. 13.

⁸ Matt. xvi. 16.

⁹ *Ueber den Ursprung des ersten kan. Evangelium*, p. 28.

making Jesus to arrive as early as possible at the conscious possession of that dignity. But if it is certain that a considerable space of time elapsed, after his appearance in public, before he openly declared his Messianic destiny, then there is no ground for the supposition that he had secretly regarded himself as the Messiah some time before, but from external considerations had kept silent about it, and bound those who knew him to be the Messiah to keep silence also. Such a supposition is altogether at variance with the singleness, openness, and strength of character which Jesus showed in all cases, where he was called upon to be true to a conviction. On the other hand, in the fact that Jesus did not immediately upon his first appearance regard his work as Messianic, there is nothing derogatory to the elevation of his mind or the purity of his character.¹ As in childhood, so in manhood, he steadily developed, uninterruptedly learning obedience to the Divine will,—as was acknowledged even in the subsequent apostolic time,²—purifying and perfecting himself to fulfill the work laid on him by God. While *Neander* infers from 'the right understanding of the history of the temptation'³ that Jesus had from the first the whole plan of his work clearly portrayed to his consciousness, directly the reverse is shown by the legend of the temptation rightly understood, especially according to the intimations contained in the third gospel, namely, that the spiritual and moral process in the soul of the Saviour was completed only with his death. Only thus does he appear as a real man, engaged in a continuous wrestling with the conditions and limitations of this earthly life; only thus can he be conceived of and represented as an historically intelligible personality.

There is, moreover, a very important reason, never yet mentioned to our knowledge, why Jesus *could not* at the first consider and declare himself the Messiah. The Messianic idea, as in course of time it had shaped itself, was most intimately interwoven with the national theocratic hopes and expectations, and it was precisely these that Jesus had to oppose in the strongest manner. Hence he was at the first conscious only of his opposition to the popular idea of the Messiah. The conviction that he was to fulfill that idea in a higher sense, was the result of a ripening experience, of continued labour; and only then was it possible for him to declare his Messiahship. Why his declaration that he was the Messiah, continued to be variously misunderstood is likewise, under such circumstances, easily explained. He lacked all the marks which the Messianic ideas of his time required.

6. p. 62. In accordance with the disposition, even of later theologians, to harmonize the gospels, the account which the fourth gospel gives of the calling of the disciples is wont to be brought as closely as possible into agreement with the representations of the Synoptics. Thus

¹ Comp. *Strauss*, *Leben Jesu*, § 58.

² Phil. ii. 8; Heb. v. 8.

³ *Neander*, *ib.* p. 117.

*Neander*¹ is of opinion, that the *first* company of the disciples gained in Perea after the baptism accompanied Jesus back to Galilee, but did not permanently join him until he took a new occasion to draw those whom he had called, and that then he summoned them to forsake their calling, and to follow him. *Hase*² likewise supposes a double calling of the disciples, and explains the difference between the fourth gospel and the three other gospels by supposing that oral tradition preserved only the second calling. *Ewald*³ gives up the attempt of fully harmonizing the two accounts. He concedes that the calling of the two pairs of brothers is represented by the Synoptics as having taken place not in Perea, but at the lake of Gennesaret, and explains this from the whole plan of 'the older narration,' according to which the first public appearance of Jesus occurred somewhat later, and he finds himself compelled to suppose an earlier and rather undefined connection between the disciples and Jesus in Perea. *Meyer*,⁴ on the contrary, perceives that the Synoptic account is wholly irreconcilable with that of the fourth gospel in time, place, and circumstance, and rightly directs attention to the fact that the explanation according to which in the fourth gospel only a provisional calling of disciples takes place, conflicts with the account in the same gospel, which represents the disciples as accompanying Jesus back to Cana, and as being and remaining with him uninterruptedly.⁵ But when Meyer, notwithstanding this right comprehension, charges with 'critical self-delusion' those theologians who give the preference, on the score of credibility, to the representation of the Synoptics, he appears to have sought the 'self-delusion' in the wrong quarter. That Jesus, after having received baptism from John, thereby declaring that he disclaimed at that time an independent activity, and before having attained to the self-possession, and having overcome in the conflicts, the memory of which the legend of the temptation preserved—should have called disciples, and without any further preparation have announced himself to them as the Messiah promised in the Old Testament, is an account of the case far more intelligible from the stand-point of a narrator, swayed by a dogmatic bias, than from the ground of actual facts.

7. p. 63. According to the third gospel, Jesus began his public teaching in Nazareth,⁶ to which supposition the Evangelist was probably led by the fact that Nazareth was the birthplace of Jesus. But in this account of Luke there are several indications that the incident at Nazareth which he relates, occurred at a later point of time. Thus we read that Jesus taught in their synagogues, being glorified of all;⁷ which presupposes a previous activity of some length in Galilee, and a

¹ *Leben Jesu*, p. 243 *et seq.*

² *Leben Jesu*, p. 92.

³ *Geschichte Christus*, p. 251.

⁴ *Ex. Handbuch zum Ev. Joh.*, p. 109.

⁵ *John* ii. 2.

⁶ *Luke* iv. 16.

⁷ *Luke* iv. 16.

reputation which could have been gained only after repeated proofs of his power as a teacher. That Jesus in his *first* discourse, in the synagogue of his native town, should have reproached his fellow-townsmen with so much severity on account of their unbelief,¹ is the more unlikely as they are reported to have commended the grace of his words.² Besides, the reference he makes to the *γερόμενα εἰς τὴν Καπερναούμ* points to previous labours in Capernaum.³ And, finally, the attempt of 'those of the synagogue' to throw him headlong from the brow of the hill,⁴ is not sufficiently accounted for by the reproaches cast by Jesus upon the Nazarenes; and the idea of an already very considerable increase of miraculous power in Jesus shows traces of a later legend.⁵ The report that Jesus made his first appearance in public in his native town is not contained in the second gospel, and the first gospel states in general terms that he taught and laboured after the calling of the disciples, in Galilee and in the region of Decapolis.⁶ According to the second gospel and the first, Jesus, at a later period, after his fame had been for some time established in Galilee, made an attempt in the synagogue at Nazareth to convert his townsmen,⁷ an attempt, however, which wholly failed. The third Evangelist drew the account of the incident at Nazareth not from the Primitive Mark, but from a later source, in which probably no time was indicated when the incident occurred. We are therefore justified in placing the commencement of the public teaching of Jesus in Capernaum.

8. p. 67. The question, how far Jesus shared in the views of his time and country, and therefore in their prejudices and errors in regard to matters physical, historical, political, &c., cannot be satisfactorily answered. When *E. Renan* expresses the opinion that Jesus shared in all the superstitious notions of the age, and gives us the good advice: *Supprimons dans nos instructions religieuses la chimère qui enfut l'âme*,⁸ he ought to have given proof of the correctness of this opinion. We should, at all events, distinguish between the *scientific suppositions* and the *religious-moral convictions* of Jesus. There is just as little reason for us to suppose that he had a critical acquaintance with the origin of the Book of Daniel, as there is reason to suppose an obligation to submit ourselves to his authority in this respect in which he had no desire to be an authority. Generally speaking, it is, however, probable that the great and free scope of his mind, which gradually raised him above all theocratic prejudices, that the boldness and breadth of his point of view, immeasurably elevated as it was above the theological scholasticism of his time, protected him in what was essential against the confusing influences of the errors and superstitions of his age. Without a certain accommodation to the errors and

¹ Luke iv. 24.² Luke iv. 22.³ Luke iv. 23.⁴ Luke iv. 28.⁵ Luke iv. 30.⁶ Matt. iv. 23.⁷ Mark vi. 1; Matt. xiii. 54.⁸ Vie de Jésus, p. 125.

prejudices of those whom he aims to affect and educate, a teacher can have no hope of exerting a beneficial influence, and it is therefore wrong at once to reject the idea that Jesus adapted himself to his time. Beyond all doubt he took up into his representations the demonological notions of his day, generally prevalent among the Jews, especially among the Pharisees, and used them for a purpose. But how far he considered them to be true, and how far he regarded them symbolically, is quite another question. At all events, that he set forth no *doctrine* concerning Satan and demons, that he only occasionally made use of the popular notions on these subjects, that he often spoke especially of Satan in a *strictly symbolical* sense, that consequently no definite view of Jesus concerning superterrestrial spirits can now be given—these are points beyond all dispute.¹

9. p. 73. How much more difficult it is to conceive of the cure by Jesus of a leper than of a person mentally diseased, *Strauss* has pointed out.² We have to conceive how a 'skin, which in consequence of a thorough corruption of the blood, had been eaten into by the most obstinate and malignant of eruptions, was instantly rendered pure and sound by a word and a touch.' But this is no reason why the narrative itself should be thrust back into the region of fable.³ *Hase* calls attention to the fact that cutaneous diseases are often very movable, and remarks that no positive law of nature was violated by the power of Jesus over leprosy.⁴ In reply to this remark, it may indeed be said that the sudden restoration of an organism in a state of dissolution through an insidious poison, a renewal not only of its corrupted vital fluids, but also of the particles of the skin and body already destroyed by the poison, could not possibly be regarded as an effect of spiritual and moral influence, but must rather be conceived of as an absolutely new creation. But this conception is irreconcilable with an historical representation of the person and work of Jesus, and presupposes the dogmatic representation of the Church concerning his person and work. A mythical origin of the narrative is, however, for several reasons, not to be admitted. In the first place, the narrative is given by the Primitive Mark; and Peter, from whom Mark received it, had it from Jesus himself.⁵ Then again it contains particulars which cannot have been invented—such as the harsh manner of Jesus to the man whom he healed,⁶ the forbidding him to tell any one of his cure, and the command to show himself to the priest and to make the offering for his purification prescribed by Moses. How strong the disposition to exaggeration in the evangelical tradition concerning miraculous healings, is

¹ See my *Christl. Dogmatik*, Bd. II., p. 271 *et seq.*

² *Leben Jesu*, Bd. II., § 90.

³ As *Strauss* thinks, according to the analogy of Ex. iv. 6; Num. xii. 10; 2 Kings v. 1.

⁴ *Leben Jesu*, p. 137.

⁵ Mark i. 30 *et seq.*

⁶ Mark i. 43.

seen by comparing the first two Evangelists,¹ who call the man healed a 'leper' (λεπρός), with the third Evangelist, who describes him as a 'man full of leprosy' (ἀνὴρ πλήρης λέπρας).² It is not improbable that the leper, when he went to Jesus, was already in an advanced stage of cure, but received from Jesus an access of vital power greatly accelerating his restoration.

10. p. 77. Opinions continue to vary materially as to the sense in which Jesus applied to himself the designation 'son of man.' Those who see in this the characteristic predicate of the Messiah, refer not only to the Book of Daniel,³ but also to the Book of Enoch, written probably long before the Christian era.⁴ Hitzig has shown, in regard to the son of man (שׂנִי אָדָם) in the Book of Daniel, that the reference to the Messiah cannot be sustained.⁵ There is in the expression 'son of man' in this passage the secondary idea of a lowly condition; for he who comes from heaven, and who on account of his lofty descent was to be an exalted, divine person, has only the state of a man. The most plausible supposition is that the 'son of man' in the Book of Daniel is a personification of the Jewish people, the saints and righteous among them, reduced to a state of the deepest humiliation by Antiochus Epiphanes.⁶ To this 'people of the saints' (קְדוֹשֵׁי יִשְׂרָאֵל) the kingdom and dominion shall be given,⁷ their kingdom shall be an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey them. Accordingly, in conformity with the vision of the apocalyptic writer, the kingdoms of the beasts shall fall to pieces, and the kingdom of lowly and oppressed humanity, of the down-trodden and persecuted saints of God, overthrown on earth, will descend from heaven as the true and everlasting kingdom of God. The same idea is found in the Book of Enoch, the Messianic portion of which⁸ begins with a description of the 'community of the Righteous' by which the mighty kings will be destroyed. This community of the Righteous, the 'elect and holy children,' will (as in the Book of Daniel) descend from the high heavens and unite with the 'children of men.'⁹ They will thus be even as the sons of men; they will humble themselves to them. The community of the Saints, according to the Book of Enoch, is pre-existent in Heaven. Consequently it is not improbable that the 'Elect and son of man,'¹⁰ as

¹ Mark i. 40; Matt. viii. 2.

² Luke v. 12.

³ Dan. vii. 13.

⁴ See Ewald, Ueber das aethiopische Buch Henoch, Entstehung, Sinn und Zusammensetzung, Gött. 1854. Hilgenfeld, and especially Volkmar, is of directly an opposite opinion,—Beiträge zur Zeitschrift der deutsch-morgenländischen Gesellschaft, 1860, 1, und Zeitschrift für wissenschaftliche Theologie, 1861, 2.

⁵ Ex. Handbuch zum A. T., Bd. X., p. 115.

⁶ Dan. vii. 21, 22, 25.

⁷ Dan. vii. 27.

⁸ Dillmann, Das Buch Henoch, p. 18; comp. ch. xxxviii. of the book.

⁹ Ib., ch. xxxix.

¹⁰ Ib., chs. xlv., xlv i., xlix. and liii.

he is often called, is only a personification of this heavenly and holy community descending to earth, for they are the same predicates which are given to both. The designation of the 'Elect' is used in the Book of Enoch sometimes in the singular and sometimes in the plural,¹ and the honour and glory which shall be given to him shall be given also to the Saints.² The son of man, whom the kings implore, upon whom they set their hope, before whom they shall at last humble themselves, can denote only the glorified community of the Saints itself,³ which is conceived of at one time as a pre-existent ideal community, as such the 'son of man,' and then again as the community chosen and sanctified from among the people of Israel.

Whether the passage referred to in the Book of Daniel were present to the mind of Jesus, whether he were acquainted with the expectations expressed in the Book of Enoch, cannot now be determined with certainty. The main point, however, is that he styled himself most explicitly the 'son of man' at a point of time in his public career when *he could not possibly have had any idea of making a public declaration of his Messianic dignity and destiny.*

On the contrary, from the very beginning of his public activity, his express design was to establish a community resting upon principles, inner and moral, directly opposed to the theocratic system. He sought to build up the kingdom of God or the community of the Saints, and in aiming to establish it among the poor, the lowly and oppressed of the people, who alone seemed to him prepared for and worthy of it, he unhesitatingly held himself to be the representative of this class, and took upon him the obloquy which in all times is the lot of those who in the spirit of child-like self-sacrifice devote themselves to the cause of the humblest and lowest. He was the 'man,' the 'son of man.' *He had—he sought, no other rank and no other title;* least of all did he assume any royal appellation, either as a son of David or a son of God. He was evidently conscious of being not an ordinary man like any other, but *the man—the man who, in that age of universal confusion, when the despotism of the letter reigned far and wide, was bound to come forth from the midst of the people, in order to guide our misled and crushed human nature back into the true path and raise it up to God.* He was conscious of being the true man renewed in the likeness of God, the man who bore the poor people in his heart, the man who in the lowly spirit of self-sacrifice offered himself to every pain and pang, the man who, as *Baur* strikingly remarks,⁴ considered it as his most particular calling to submit to all the sufferings and sacrifices inseparable from his work. That such a man—of no account in the estimation of the distinguished Jewish theologues and hierarchs—felt himself authorized to forgive sins, was certainly a matter of sur-

¹ Book of Enoch, ch. xlviii.

² *Ib.*, chs. l., lviii.

³ *Ib.*, chs. lxii., lxiii.

⁴ *Zeitschrift für wissenschaftliche Theologie*, 3. Bd., 3, p. 280.

prise to those whose religious and moral consciousness drew life only from tradition. However glorious the Sabbath, this *man* is yet lord of the Sabbath.¹ He has indeed no abiding place where to lay his head.² As son of man he will be delivered into the hands of men,³ as such come again in the splendour of heavenly glory.⁴ Accordingly, that opinion has in itself most probability which considers Jesus as applying this appellation to himself in a *sense wholly new, original, and peculiar*. So far from connecting it with the Messianic prophecies of the Old Testament, he rather sought to keep far away all idea of any theocratic expectations as about to be fulfilled in his person.⁵

11. p. 85. The narrative of the marriage feast at Cana has without any hesitation been pronounced a myth by *D. F. Strauss*,⁶ who in justification of his opinion refers to the change of water into blood,⁷ of bitter water into sweet by Moses,⁸ and of unwholesome into wholesome water by Elisha.⁹ *Baur* remarks, on the contrary,¹⁰ that where a reflective purpose predominates so decidedly, where the mode of representation in its whole arrangement points in so orderly a manner to a determinate idea, the supposition of a myth can have no place. He on his part claims for the narrative rather a symbolico-typical character. The water he takes as the element and symbol of the Baptist, the wine as the symbol of the superiority of the Messiah over his forerunner, and the change of the water into wine as signifying the transition and advance from the preparatory period of the Baptist to the epoch of the power and glory of the Messiah. The marriage feast itself, at which the Messiah appears with his disciples in order to manifest his glory, he takes as signifying the Messianic marriage feast, the Messiah as the bridegroom, who entertains the guests from the fullness of his gifts, and suffers nothing to be wanting that will contribute to their enjoyment; and from the distribution of the wine, the thought of the wine of the Lord's Supper is not wholly to be excluded. *Hilgenfeld*, again, is of opinion that the miracle at Cana related in the fourth gospel takes the place of the Temptation related in the Synoptics, and that the Evangelist designed therein to represent Christ, as from the first, exalted above all narrow-minded asceticism, and as in the unbounded fullness of his wonder-working power.¹¹ But these modes of explanation are founded upon the erroneous supposition that the fourth gospel, under its dogmatic bias, *invented* the materials of its narratives. As little reason as there is to suppose that the

¹ Mark ii. 28; Matt. xii. 8; Luke vi. 5.

² Matt. viii. 20; Luke ix. 58.

³ Mark ix. 31; Matt. xvii. 22; Luke ix. 44.

⁴ Mark xiv. 62; Matt. xxvi. 64; Luke xxii. 69.

⁵ *Weisse*, Ueber die Zukunft der ev. Kirche, p. 230.

⁶ *Leben Jesu*, Bd. II., § 99; *Leben Jesu für das deutsche Volk*, p. 506.

⁷ Exod. vii. 15.

⁸ Exod. xv. 23; see also Exod. xvii. 5; Num. xx. 8.

⁹ 2 Kings ii. 19.

¹⁰ *Baur*, kan. Evangelien, p. 121.

¹¹ *Die Evangelien*, p. 248.

fourth Evangelist invented the accounts of the relation of the Baptist to Jesus, of the calling of the disciples, the purification of the temple, &c.—accounts which, though in other and more natural connections, are yet vouched for by the Synoptics—just so little reason is there to suppose the narrative of the marriage feast at Cana to have been invented in order to bring Jesus into the scene as the Messianic bridegroom, or for the sake of exalting him by contrasting the elevation of his mind with the narrow asceticism of the Baptist, withdrawing from the world. In this passage also the fourth gospel has used, in order to serve its purpose, an historical incident furnished by tradition.

That Jesus took part in social joys, as on other occasions,¹ so in a marriage feast, and did not consider it derogatory to his personal dignity and his life work to provide wine when the wine failed,—this is the historical nucleus of the incident. The apparent harshness with which he speaks to his mother² is certainly no invention. It finds a natural explanation by reference to the position in which he then stood to the members of his own family.³ The miracle itself belongs to the later formation of legend. It is very natural, when the true historical image of the Saviour was becoming gradually obscured by the subsequent dogmatic idea of his personal equality with God, that the merely kindly human participation in a wedding festivity, the care shown by him in providing wine when the wine failed, should seem to be inconsistent with his personal dignity, and that it should be sought to relieve this inconsistency by a miraculous changing of water into wine, a change produced by Almighty power. Finally, the remark of *Lücke* is of weight: 'If there be no historical fact at the foundation of the narrative, its origin is unaccountable.'⁴ But it is entirely unhistorical to convert the miracle into an accelerated natural process, and to compare the wedding wine, produced by the Divine 'creative power of Jesus, to exhilarating mineral water.'⁵ Notwithstanding his solemn protest against this natural process, *Meyer* virtually accepts it when he supposes a change of substance effected by the power of Jesus over natural laws, 'according to a higher order of causality.'⁶ *Ewald*, on the other hand, gives up the miracle entirely, when he understands the narrative in the sense that the water became like wine of the best quality through the presence of Jesus, and suggests the question, whether water will not everywhere become wine in the highest sense, even at this day, where the spirit of Christ reigns.⁷

12. p. 95. Our statement of the manner in which Jesus chose the

¹ Mark ii. 16; Matt. ix. 10; Luke v. 29.

² John ii. 4.

³ Mark iii. 21; iii. 31.

⁴ Commentar über das Evangel. des Johannes, I. p. 477.

⁵ Olshausen, Biblischer Commentar zu Joh. ii. 2-12; Neander, Leben Jesu, p. 373.

⁶ Ex. Handbuch zum Evangel. des Johannes, p. 117.

⁷ Geschichte Christus, p. 256.

twelve disciples has been pronounced improbable. *Schleiermacher* supposes, that from the larger company of the hearers of Jesus a smaller select circle gradually separated itself,—that Jesus in fact did not choose his disciples, but the disciples chose him.¹ *Strauss*, on the other hand, found in the number twelve certain traces of the primitive Christian legend, which, in accordance with its Jewish colouring, referred by this number to the twelve tribes of Israel, thus intimating to the Jews the Messianic destiny of Jesus; yet *Strauss* now considers only the sending forth of the twelve during the lifetime of Jesus as doubtful, not their having being chosen by Jesus.² The supposition of *Schleiermacher* is at variance with the commanding personality of Jesus; the supposition of *Strauss*, with the unanimity of all four gospels regarding the number of twelve, as well as with the account in the Book of Acts of the filling up of that number by a new choice,³ and with the express testimony of the Apostle Paul to the appearance of Jesus to the twelve.⁴ It certainly seems remarkable that, with a few exceptions, all accounts of the later labours of the twelve have been lost. If Jesus only intended from among his adherents to make choice of the best and most able, the thought suggests itself that he was not altogether fortunate in his choice. But if his aim especially was, by the choice of twelve laymen—called without reference to tribe, descent, or family,—to represent symbolically the new Israel created by the spirit of truth and freedom, in opposition to the theocratically arranged nation, then the idea that every one of the twelve was bound personally to distinguish himself falls to the ground.⁵

13. p. 96. All the attempts of the harmonists, which aim at reconciling the two accounts of the so called Sermon on the Mount,⁶ have to be given up as fruitless and sophistical. Whoever is bent upon maintaining faith in the infallibility of the Scriptural writers by supposing with *Ebrard*,⁷ that the plain in Luke vi. 17 was on the mountain, i. e. that the mountain was a plain, is at liberty to do so; but the question, which of the two accounts is the original, is worthy of consideration. That the first Evangelist does not give us the discourse originally uttered by Jesus is evident—as was long since acknowledged by *Schulz*, *Sieffert* and others—from the fact that not a few of the sayings contained in the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew occur in the second and third gospels in very different and more natural connections. Thus is it with the saying about salt, which is found in the second and third gospels in a somewhat different form,⁸ where it suits better the more advanced stage of development reached by the disciples. So also with

¹ Ueber den Lucas, p. 88.

² Leben Jesu, Bd. I. § 71; Leben Jesu für das deutsche Volk, p. 274.

³ Acts i. 13.

⁴ 1 Cor. xv. 5.

⁵ See the striking remarks of *Weisse*, Die ev. Geschichte, Bd. I. p. 394.

⁶ Matt. v. 1; Luke vi. 20.

⁷ Wissenschaftliche Kritik, p. 350.

⁸ Mark ix. 49; Luke xiv. 34.

the saying about light.¹ The saying that heaven and earth will sooner pass away than one tittle of the law, is found in another connection in Luke.² So is it likewise with what is said about being reconciled to an adversary.³ The warning against temptation recurs in a more appropriate connection in the first gospel itself.⁴ What is said of divorce has a more fitting place in Mark⁵ than in Matthew,⁶ while in Luke it stands by itself.⁷ The Lord's Prayer comes in more naturally in Luke⁸ than in the first gospel. The saying concerning the forgiveness of injuries, in the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew,⁹ is introduced more naturally afterwards in the same gospel.¹⁰ Luke puts also in another connection the admonition to lay up treasure in Heaven,¹¹ the saying concerning the inner light,¹² and the warning against needless cares.¹³ The warning against censoriousness in Matthew is found in quite another connection in Mark.¹⁴ The admonition to prayer is likewise recorded, in the third gospel,¹⁵ in a wholly different connection from that in which it appears in the first. The command to enter the narrow gate was given, according to Luke,¹⁶ upon the last journey of Jesus to Jerusalem. The saying about the good tree and the evil tree occurs twice in Matthew, and each time in a different connection.¹⁷

Hence it follows indubitably that the first Evangelist has in the so called Sermon on the Mount, put together, according to his judgment, into *one* composition, the various sayings and precepts of Jesus, originally uttered upon different occasions. That the discourse of Jesus is reported in its original form in the third gospel has been denied by *D. F. Strauss* and others, but the arguments in support of this denial are not decisive. *Schleiermacher* supposes¹⁸ that the pronouncing of woes reported by Luke was an addition of this Evangelist; but it is, on the contrary, much more probable that the first Evangelist omitted these woes out of consideration for such members of the Christian body as happened to be wealthy. It is supposed that there is also an omission in Luke's report of the Sermon on the Mount,¹⁹ on account of the words 'but I say unto you' (*ἀλλὰ ὑμῖν λέγω*). Yet the admonition to love one's enemies forms a quite fitting contrast to the preceding woes, which should not prevent our loving those upon whom these woes are pronounced. The command to be patient and forbearing,²⁰ it is said, is too loosely introduced by the precept enjoining the love of enemies. But a patient and forbearing spirit is naturally connected with the disposition to love our enemies. The declaration that to

¹ Mark iv. 21; Luke xi. 33.² Luke xvi. 17.³ Luke xii. 58.⁴ Matt. xviii. 8; comp. Matt. v. 29, and Mark ix. 47.⁵ Mark x. 11.⁶ Matt. v. 32.⁷ Luke xvi. 18.⁸ Luke xi. 1.⁹ Matt. vi. 14; see also Mark xi. 26.¹⁰ Matt. xviii. 35.¹¹ Luke xii. 33.¹² Luke xi. 34.¹³ Luke xii. 22.¹⁴ Matt. vii. 2; Mark iv. 24.¹⁵ Luke xi. 9; comp. Matt. vii. 7.¹⁶ Luke xiii. 23.¹⁷ Matt. vii. 16; xii. 33.¹⁸ Ueber den Lucas, p. 70.¹⁹ Luke vi. 27.²⁰ Luke vi. 29.

love friends only, does not meet the moral standard of a disciple of Jesus,¹ is considered to have no connection in thought with what precedes, 'as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them.' But it stands in close connection with the whole section, beginning with the twenty-seventh verse (Luke vi.), where the subject is the admonition to love disinterestedly, which includes that, in the treatment of others, we should put them on the same footing with ourselves. Through the four sections into which we have divided the discourse of Jesus, as given by Luke, there runs a thread nowhere broken, binding it into a whole. The first section, while condemning the opposite spirit, presents the ideal of the true disciple. The second section describes the condition through which true discipleship has to prove itself. The third is a warning against evil words; the fourth, against idle words. The significance of the whole becomes full and clear only when considered in reference to the opposite theocratic system. We cannot, therefore, by any means admit that the first Evangelist has 'a better understanding of this discourse of Jesus, that he has reported it more completely and more exactly in particulars.'²

14. p. 121. The accounts of the miracles, which we have examined in the tenth chapter of the third section, show how early the evangelical history began to be embellished with pious legends. All the efforts of the apologists avail nothing against this fact.—In the storm upon the lake, according to Neander, it was by the 'Divine word of power' that Jesus reduced the waves to instant stillness. But as, according to Neander's idea, Jesus was not almighty like God, the question is not to be avoided from his stand-point, whence then did Jesus obtain the ability and authority to exercise such 'Divine power'? Neander does not dispute that the divine idea of Christ would suffer no loss, even if there were, on this occasion, no miracle strictly so called, no immediate effect wrought upon inanimate nature, but only an influence exercised directly upon the minds of the disciples.³ But while he does not accept this view, he makes no attempt whatever to render intelligible his mode of viewing the miracle supernaturally. *Ebrard* occupies the happiest position, inasmuch as from 'the dogmatic (?) stand-point of the Bible' there are no difficulties whatever.⁴ *Hase*, on the other hand, remarks⁵ how easily may it have happened that the Messiah, in his symbolical manner said, 'Peace, be still,' to the inner storm of fear in the minds of his apostles, and that the ground of his confidence came afterwards to be misunderstood. *Meyer* pronounces such an attempt at explaining the miracle a 'naturalizing' of the history, and from his supernaturalistic point of

¹ Luke vi. 32.

² As Neander, *e.g.* maintains, *Leben Jesu Christi*, p. 455.

³ *Leben Jesu*, p. 367.

⁴ *Wissenschaftliche Kritik*, p. 322.

⁵ *Leben Jesu*, p. 138.

view, which is akin to that of *Ebrard*, is of opinion that the allaying of the storm is to be ascribed to the indwelling *Divine* power of Jesus, in view of which, it is no more difficult to attribute to him power over the elements than to ascribe to him an influence over the bodily organism.¹ In opposition to such an unthinking supernaturalism, *Strauss* observes very justly² that this miracle then presupposes not merely that Jesus had power psychologically over the mind and through the mind over the body, but that he was able to act immediately upon unintelligent, inanimate nature. The former implies a human medium, the latter requires *Divine* Omnipotence. But an 'Omnipotent' Christ is not a personality historically representable.

In the cure of the demoniac of Gadara, *Neander* is of opinion that 'from a cause unknown to us' the herd of swine became terrified, and was precipitated over the steep shore;³ and *Hase* sees in the destruction of the herd a disaster unforeseen yet possible with animals so shy and gregarious.⁴ Even *Meyer*, notwithstanding his deep-rooted supernaturalism, thinks it necessary to regard this narrative as of a legendary character in part, as he cannot bring himself to see in the demoniacs persons really possessed.⁵ But *Delitzsch* shows himself of a stouter faith in the second edition of his 'System of Biblical Psychology,'⁶ where, in speaking of the demons in the possessed Gadarenes, he expresses himself to this effect, that 'they (the demons), concealing themselves in living bodies and spending their fury upon corporeal creatures, felt a restraint put upon the frenzy with which their purely spiritual natures were seized and convulsed.' Jesus, he says, granted these demons what they implored of him, in order that the two possessed men might be the more thoroughly convinced of their miraculous deliverance. But that would be an extremely weak faith, the strengthening of which required the destruction of a whole herd of swine in the sea. Ought not the healing by the influence of Jesus to have proved the miraculous deliverance far more convincingly?⁷

The supernatural conception of the feeding of the five thousand, is embarrassed by special difficulties. While *Meyer* has no hesitation in supposing the presence of legendary elements in the account of the Gadarene maniacs, it is not easy to see why he should hesitate to suppose the same in the story of the miraculous feeding of the multitude. In the first instance, as in the second, the supposition is certainly in opposition to the evangelical statements. The assertion that there were no possessed persons and that the demons did not really, at the command of Jesus, enter the swine, contradicts the letter of the evangelical narrative even more directly than does the assertion that Jesus did not multiply miraculously the loaves and the fishes, since, at

¹ Ex. Handbuch zu Matt. viii. 23-27.

² Leben Jesu Christi, p. 361.

³ Ex. Handbuch zum Evangelium des Matthäus, p. 212.

⁴ P. 298.

⁵ Leben Jesu, § 97.

⁶ Leben Jesu, p. 139.

least from the discourses of Jesus in the fourth gospel, we may form some conclusion as to the nature of the occurrence.

Whoever maintains the possibility of a creative (*i.e.* of omnipotent) power in Jesus,—whereby he restored dead bodies to life and multiplied substances artificially prepared (like bread),—and at the same time is content to believe with *Meyer* in 'its complete incomprehensibility,' certainly is not to be envied from a scientific point of view for his mental repose; neither has he any cause to boast of the 'objective principles' of his method of Scriptural interpretation. The one purpose of the study of the gospels is nothing less than to gather therefrom an historically true idea of the character of Jesus. But how can we so much as speak of a *human* character in Jesus if, almighty like God, he creates, destroys, and multiplies whatever he pleases and as he pleases?

In regard to the miracle of the feeding of the multitude, *Neander* gives up all attempts at explanation. He sees in it the climax of the miraculous. The deficiency of natural means—loaves and fishes—is supplied by the miraculous power of Jesus; he makes much out of little. The difficulty certainly is not in the least degree obviated by *Neander's* leaving the incident to stand by itself as utterly incomprehensible, and attempting to draw from it a practical and edifying significance representing the power of Christ as working in all ages, in things physical and spiritual, accomplishing through the spirit proceeding from him the greatest ends with slight means.¹ And the allegorical interpretation of the event is but a modestly disguised attempt to render the miracle, unintelligible in itself, palatable to the intelligent and thoughtful.

We cannot, however, agree with *Strauss* that this story of the feeding of the multitude is a myth,—an opinion which he sets forth with singular acuteness. It is intrinsically improbable that an evangelical narrative, so strongly certified in its main features, should have had no historical occasion, and should be a pure invention. It would then be incomprehensible how the account of Mark, coming directly from Peter, should twice give, with some differences, the same occurrence. Neither is its origin a parable spoken by Jesus,² containing instructions to his disciples about the figurative nature of deep sayings of his.³ In this case there would be some trace in the evangelical text, that Jesus delivered this parable in connection with such parabolic discourses.⁴ Much more probable is it that the *spiritual* nourishment which Jesus offered in his discourses to the multitude gathered around him in the wilderness, and which he compared with the *physical* nourishment afforded by the manna of the desert, was converted through the marvel-loving legend into a *physical* feeding of the multitude by a miraculous

¹ *Leben Jesu Christi*, p. 381.

² *Weisse*, *Evangelische Geschichte*, Bd. I. p. 513.

³ Mark viii. 14; Matt. xvi. 5.

⁴ Comp. Mark vi. 30 *et seq.*

increase of the food at hand. The feeding of the multitude actually took place, and in consequence of the provident arrangements of Jesus. That the disciples were sent out by Jesus to procure such provisions as were wanting, admits of no doubt.¹ It is certain also that Jesus distributed the food by the hands of his disciples, and as the host on the occasion and as head of the company, offered the customary thanks.² That the later legend should make use of these details, in order thereby to render more credible the idea of a supernatural multiplication of the food by Jesus, who blessed it and gave it to his disciples to distribute, lies in the nature of the case. Either Mark, going beyond the statements of Peter in this as in other narrations of miracles, took the story in the shape which had become current in his time, or the person who worked it over again after Mark added to it the miraculous exaggeration.

15. p. 126. The passage Matthew v. 17-20 has, on account of its objectionable contents, given occasion to many arbitrary and sophistical interpretations. Even *De Wette*³ has not kept entirely clear from these when he expresses the opinion that, according to the spirit of it, *i. e.* for the purposes of devotion, Christianity has really not abolished the Mosaic ritual law, but perfected it. But in verses 18 and 19 there is nothing said of an attempt on the part of Jesus to perfect the Mosaic Law; Jesus declares that not the smallest letter (the Yod), not a tittle of the Law shall 'pass away,' *i. e.* fall, lose its worth and its importance in the founding of his community. Therefore, according to *De Wette*, Jesus ought to have said that the *letter* and the *tittles* would pass away, *i. e.* lose their worth and importance, but the *spirit* of the Law would find in his kingdom an ever more complete fulfillment. He would then have said about the opposite of what the first Evangelist reports him to have said. *Hofmann*⁴ interprets the passage in a still more arbitrary manner, when he maintains that it was not separate isolated laws which as such the Lord sought to render more intense and impressive, but that he referred to the one and essential *will* of the Lawgiver underlying them, expressed in the manifold separate laws under the Old Covenant, but which will would not come out in the letter of an isolated external law. This explanation, as every unprejudiced, critical eye sees, is put into the text, and is not an exposition of the text. *Olshausen* is even of the opinion that Jesus intends to say that the character of the whole Old Testament is typical, that it abolishes itself (!) as soon as that which is typified has made its appearance, as the blossom disappears in order to complete itself in the fruit.⁵ Into such sophistries and distortions does the interpretation of the Scriptures

¹ Mark vi. 37.

² Mark vi. 40; Mark viii. 6; Matt. xiv. 19; Luke ix. 16; John vi. 11.

³ Erklärung des Evangeliums des Matthäus.

⁴ Schriftbeweis, II., 1, 75.

⁵ Biblischer Commentar zu Matt. v. 17-19.

inevitably run, when simple truth is sacrificed to dogmatic theories. The fact that this passage is found only in Matthew is noteworthy. The original declaration of Jesus most probably is given in Luke,¹ where the subject of discourse is the Pharisaic pride, which is an abomination in the sight of God. This pride had its deep root in the relation of the Pharisees to the Law and the Prophets, of which they would fain be esteemed the guardians and privileged interpreters. Jesus shows that they no longer had any right to rest themselves upon the Law, as according to verse 16, the Law was binding only till the time of the Baptist John, with whom a new era—the era of the evangelical announcement—had dawned, and men were pressing with violence into the Divine kingdom of the Gospel. In connection herewith Jesus, as is commonly understood, went on to say² that it was easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one tittle of the Law to fall. But it is clear that the utterance in verse 16 excludes verse 17 from being an utterance of Jesus. In verse 16 Jesus declares that the Law reached its end with the Baptist, the Gospel being something new beyond the Law; and the fact that every one was pressing into the kingdom announced by Jesus shows that the period of the Law had terminated. After *so explicit an antinomistic* declaration, how could Jesus have gone on to say that not one tittle could fall of that Law which he considered obsolete? The particle ‘but’ (δέ) in verse 17 shows that an assertion in contradiction to the preceding verse now follows. On this account, the commentators who endeavour to bring the two verses into harmony, have tried to improve the text, as, for example, Marcion, instead of ‘of the law’ (τοῦ νόμου) would read ‘of my words’ (τῶν λόγων μου), and recently Volkmar³ proposed to read ‘of the words of God’ (τῶν λόγων τοῦ Θεοῦ). Acute as they may be, these are violent solutions. A rational connection between these two verses exists only by supposing that verse 17 is not a saying of Jesus, but contains the assertion of the Pharisees with whom Jesus was contending, and who, in opposition to his declaration that the Law and the Prophets had authority only until the time of John, maintained that heaven and earth would pass away before one tittle of the Law could fall. They thus ascribed to the Law in its traditional form an eternal validity—a well authenticated *Rabbinical* idea.⁴ The eighteenth verse is consequently to be understood as a conclusive rejoinder of Jesus to the Pharisaic assertion in verse 17; thus the Law allows divorce, and permits the man to marry again;⁵ the Gospel, on the contrary, declares that whoever puts away his wife and marries another, or who marries a woman that has

¹ Luke xvi. 15.

² Luke xvi. 17.

³ Das Evangelium Marc. p. 161.

⁴ Josephus says, c. Apion II. 38: ὁ τοῦν νόμος ἡμῶν ἀδύνατος διαφέρει. Matt. v. 17 is found almost in the same words in Schemoth Rabbah, 6: *Nulla litera* aboletur a lege in æternum, and still oftener in substance.

⁵ Deut. xxiv. 1.

been divorced, commits adultery. Thus, not only in one tittle, but in an essential point, is the Law *abolished* by the Gospel. The Pharisaic assertion (verse 17) is consequently completely refuted by the evangelical declaration (verse 18). The third Evangelist probably did not clearly perceive the connection of verse 17 with the sayings of Jesus (verses 16 and 18); the sayings came to Luke in a fragmentary form from the 'Collection of Sayings,' and the logical conjunctions were wanting. But as he, in conformity with his objective treatment of the documents, recorded the sayings word for word, it is still possible to discern the original connection. On the other hand, it is characteristic of the first Evangelist as a writer, that he should put his own construction upon the connection in which verse 17 was uttered by Jesus, and in which it probably stood in the 'Collection of Sayings,'—a construction directly at variance with the fundamental position of Jesus towards the Law, but affording a desirable defence against those who might charge Christianity with being in design or in fact antinomistic. The 17th verse is likely to have been literally uttered by Jesus, but nothing is more certain than that in verses 18 and 19 he expresses not *his own* conviction, but that of his adversaries fundamentally opposed to him.

16. p. 134. The reference of the sign of Jonah to the resurrection of Jesus by the first Evangelist, has recently been defended anew by Meyer,¹ but not with success. The fact that the second and third gospels know nothing of such a reference puts the statement of the first Evangelist in a dubious light. The declaration of Jesus in the second gospel,² that *no sign* should be given to that generation, leads plainly to the conclusion that the point of Jesus' discourse is the *refusal* of any miracle for the sake of accrediting himself. It is only thus that his reasoning has any point against the demand of his opposers. That generation, craving miracles, caring not for the teachings of truth, should have no 'sign' given but the preaching of the kingdom of God, which it rejected. And has not this preaching become the sign of awakening and rallying for the community of God? The arguments with which Meyer seeks to defend the interpretation of the sign of Jonah as given by the first Evangelist, have very little force. It is said in Matthew³ of the preaching of Jonah, that, in consequence of it, the Ninevites repented; that the marvellous fate of the prophet was known to them is not presupposed. Hence, in all probability, it was the preaching of Jonah, and not his sojourn for three days in the belly of the fish, that had the significance of a sign to the Ninevites. The idea of Meyer, that what Jesus says of the 'sign' ends with the fortieth verse, is a mere fancy. On the contrary, the comparison of Jesus with Jonah is not ended there; it concludes, not as Meyer erroneously maintains, with Jesus' designation of himself as the antitype of Jonah,

¹ Ex. Handbuch zu Matt. xii. 40.

² Mark viii. 12.

³ Matt. xii. 41.

but with his representing himself as greater than Jonah (ἰδοὺ πλεῖον Ἰωνᾶ ὃδε). Thus the sojourn of Jonah in the fish is not compared by Jesus with his sojourn in the grave, but the lesser significance of the preaching of Jonah is compared with the greater significance of his own preaching, and what he so severely reproached the Pharisees for was that, while the Ninevites were moved to repent by the lesser teacher, they, the Pharisees, were unmoved by the greater. The future tense 'shall be given' (δοθήσεται) with reference to the preaching of Jesus, was taken by the first Evangelist from the Primitive Mark,¹ and also in Luke² it stands in its right connection: There shall be no sign given to this generation but the sign of Jonah (the preaching of the Gospel), i.e. the future stands for the logical possibility. Meyer disputes, that Jonah himself was a 'sign' to the Ninevites; but apart from the fact that, in the first Gospel³ the Ninevites are set before the Pharisees as an example, and are to rise up in judgment against them at the last day—Luke states that Jonah was a sign unto the Ninevites.⁴ According to the first Evangelist, the reasoning of Jesus would have had no logical point. What Jesus condemns is the impenitence of the Pharisees notwithstanding his preaching. They demand a sign (miracle); had he replied to this demand, that there should be *no other* miracle shown them than his own resurrection, he would not only have said what was not correct—as, before his resurrection, he wrought many other miracles—but, in this case, it would not at all appear why he referred to the repentance of the Ninevites as an effect of the preaching of Jonah. In this case, he ought rather to have said: As the Ninevites repented in consequence of Jonah's sojourn in the fish, so will a similar sign—the resurrection—be given to the Pharisees, that they also may repent. But what Jesus intended to say was that, as the Ninevites repented *without miracles, purely in consequence of the preaching of Jonah*, so the Pharisees ought to be converted without miracles, by the preaching of the Gospel.

17. p. 150. There is scarcely an evangelical narrative so hard to be understood literally as that of the Transfiguration of Jesus. To argue with *Ebrard*,⁵ in order to save the story, that with God nothing is impossible, is to confess scientific bankruptcy. The feelings of *Neander*⁶ revolt against the idea of an apparition of spirits on the mount of transfiguration. But his supposition that it was all a vision, passing in sleep before the disciples, has no better historical foundation; for how should all the three disciples have dreamed the same thing, and, upon awaking, have all regarded their dream as an experienced fact? The supposition of a vision in a dream finds support, moreover, only in the third gospel,⁷ and the account there shows traces of a later tradition; according to the oldest narrative,⁸ the disciples are awake.

¹ Mark viii. 12.² Luke xi. 29.³ Matt. xii. 41.⁴ Luke xi. 30.⁵ Wissenschaftliche Kritik, p. 444.⁶ Leben Jesu Christi, p. 516.⁷ Luke ix. 32.⁸ Mark ix. 4.

The idea that there were really two men, not Moses and Elias, but unknown persons, who talked with Jesus on the mountain,¹ is opposed by the fact that the tradition asserts a supernatural appearance, and gives the well known names of Moses and Elias. Hence there remains only the supposition of the early formation of legend, by which the declarations of Jesus to his disciples concerning the relation of his Messianic work to the Law and the Prophets were popularized, and by which the plastic power of Jesus was indicated, that enabled him to bring within the sphere of his disciples' vision, the heroic forms of the men, so illustrious in religious history. Mark also adopts the tradition, circulating in the apostolic community of his time. With the above explanation, the event loses nothing of its truly historical element; while it receives an almost childish character, by supposing that it must have served Jesus as an opportunity to communicate to the fathers of the Old Covenant the blessed intelligence of his readiness to save them by his death.² From *Ebrard's* orthodox point of view, this intelligence would be the more unnecessary, as the fathers of the Old Covenant had foreseen in the clearest manner and foretold the Messiah and his work of Redemption, and therefore were fully able to communicate the intelligence to others, and were by no means under the necessity of coming down to earth to receive it. Least worthy of assent is the rationalizing supernaturalism, by means of which *Meyer* endeavours to render the story in some degree plausible to a believing understanding. According to this mode of explanation, the appearance of Moses is pronounced impossible, because his resurrection had not taken place.³ That the *three* disciples should have the same 'vision' at the same moment, is ascribed to a 'divine influence.' But why should not God, to whom nothing is impossible, have been able to create an *external* apparition, as well as a vision to three individuals at the same time? Besides, there is no reason apparent for giving (with *Meyer*) the preference to the first gospel over the second. The sunlike splendour of the countenance of Jesus, in Matthew,⁴ is a further embellishment of the snow-white shining of his garments in Mark.⁵ According to this Evangelist, at the very beginning Peter knew not what to say, which is more credible than that it was not until the voice from heaven was heard that the disciples were seized with fear, as Matthew reports.⁶ Likewise the way in which Jesus is stated to have treated the three disciples, quieting them by touching them,⁷ appears to belong to the later tradition.

18. p. 169. It was at the great decisive moment of his departure for Jerusalem that Jesus uttered the saying extolling the simple-minded, the babes.⁸ Only a mind fettered by dogmatic considerations

¹ *Hase*, *Leben Jesu*, p. 161.

² *Ex. Handbuch zu Matt. xvii.* 1-8.

³ *Mark ix.* 3.

⁷ *Matt. xvii.* 7.

² *Ebrard*, p. 438.

⁴ *Matt. xvii.* 2.

⁵ *Matt. xvii.* 6.

⁸ *Luke x.* 21; *Matt. xi.* 25.

can gather from this passage that Jesus intended therein to give a metaphysical explanation of the higher nature of his person. The wise and prudent, the theologues and metaphysicians of his time, Jesus ignores; the babes only he pronounces blessed. It is true he designates himself in this passage, the 'son' of the Heavenly Father, a designation else foreign to the Synoptics. He had reached the height of his personal consciousness, a height which until then he had not attained to, and the weight of his words lies in the declaration that unto him 'all' had been delivered by the Father. When *Meyer*¹ pronounces every limitation of 'all' (πάντα) arbitrary, he unfortunately fails to explain how an absolute surrender of 'all' to the Son by the Father is conceivable. For 'all' that the Father possesses would include his Omnipotence, his Omniscience, the preservation and government of the world, &c. In Luke (in the first gospel all connection is wanting), the words of Jesus are connected with the eighteenth verse of the tenth chapter. He had previously declared that Satan had fallen from heaven, he had empowered the disciples to tread on serpents and scorpions without receiving injury, and likewise given them the assurance that the spirits would be subject unto them. When he connects herewith the further assurance that to him 'all' is delivered by the Father, he can have had in view only the spiritual and moral sphere of his activity, relating to the building up of the kingdom of God. As to the reading of the received text, in which the knowledge of the son by the Father stands first,² the conjecture of *Hilgenfeld* has much weight, namely, that the original text is preserved by Marcion, reading thus: Οὐδεὶς ἔγνω τὸν πατέρα εἰ μὴ ὁ υἱός, καὶ τὸν υἱόν, εἰ μὴ ὁ πατήρ, καὶ ὃ ἂν ὁ υἱὸς ἀποκαλύψῃ.³ It is the new consciousness of God that Jesus above all opened to his disciples, and herewith connected itself the new consciousness of Sonship,—brought about through the Divine self-revelation in Jesus—according to which the son appeared as the one to whom the Father has delivered 'all.'

19. p. 172. The received reading, Καὶ εἶπεν, Οὐκ οἴδατε, οἷον πνεύματος ἐστε ὑμεῖς,⁴ gives, it is true, a perfectly good sense; and is entirely in keeping with the character of Jesus, but it is so insufficiently attested,⁵ that it must be taken as a later addition. That the words got into the text is by no means unaccountable (as *Meyer* thinks): they flowed probably into it from oral tradition. It is an arbitrary explanation, on the other hand, to attribute the omission of this passage in manuscripts to the oversight of transcribers, or to a reverential consideration for Elias.

20. p. 181. That the Lord's Prayer is not in its right place in

¹ Exeget. Handbuch, p. 256.

² Luke x. 22; Matt. xi. 27.

³ *Zeller's* Theol. Jahrbücher, 1853, p. 202; *Hilgenfeld*, Die Evangelien, p. 76, 185.

⁴ Luke ix. 55.

⁵ The Codex Sinaiticus also has not these words.

the Sermon on the Mount, is admitted by *Neander*,¹ and *Ewald* takes Luke's report of it to be 'evidently the oldest.'² It is only through a blind zeal to harmonize the gospels that one can go so far as to suppose (with *Meyer*) that the prayer was given upon two different occasions.³ The form of the prayer in the first gospel is evidently a later amplification of an older, original redaction. It is quite natural that additions should have gathered around the original prayer, especially as the Lord's Prayer very soon found a permanent place in Christian worship, and hence assumed a liturgical character. Such *liturgical* additions are 'our,' and 'who (art) in Heaven' (ἡμῶν, ὁ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς), joined to 'father' (πάτερ)⁴ and the doxology at the end. Amplifying elucidations are,⁵ 'thy will be done, as in Heaven so in earth' (γενηθήτω τὸ θέλημα σου, ὡς ἐν οὐρανῷ καὶ ἐπὶ γῆς), and 'but deliver us from evil' (ἀλλὰ ῥῦσαι ἡμᾶς ἀπὸ τοῦ πονηροῦ). The first elucidation reminds of the liturgical address, 'father, who (art) in Heaven' (πάτερ ὁ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς), and is a more definite form of the petition for the coming of the kingdom of God, inasmuch as it intimates *how* the kingdom of God shall come. The second elucidation softens the offensive idea which seemed to be contained in the petition, that the Heavenly Father might not lead into temptation. The historical situation in which the prayer is inserted in Luke is plain. From the fifty-first verse of the ninth chapter, the Journey Report is mixed up with narratives of the time spent by Jesus in Judea; what is related occurred upon the journey from Samaria and during the last abode of Jesus with his disciples in Judea and Jerusalem. As the scene in Bethany is mentioned in Luke, x. 38, Jesus must have given the Prayer, Luke xi. 2-4, to his disciples *after his arrival in Judea*. At all events, most of the sayings contained in the eleventh chapter of Luke were uttered during the last sojourn of Jesus in Judea.

21. p. 191. In reference to the story of the cursing of the fig-tree, *Strauss* has justly observed, that what tradition found as gnome and parabolic narrative it converted into a real event.⁷ *Neander*⁸ also concedes that the right understanding of the parabolic act⁹ is found in the parable related in the third gospel,¹⁰ and is even of opinion that Jesus uttered the parable on this occasion. In this case, it would hardly seem necessary to endeavour to make the miracle less by representing the decay of the tree as having commenced long before, and its final destruction as only accelerated by the influence of Jesus. Whoever, in opposition to the first two Evangelists, sees with *Meyer* in the withering of the fig-tree, a miraculous effect of the will of Jesus, and on

¹ *Leben Jesu Christi*, p. 230, Note.

² *Die drei ersten Evangelien*, p. 286.

³ *Ex. Handbuch zu Matt. vi. 9, and Luke xi. 1.*

⁴ *Matt. vi. 9.*

⁵ *Matt. vi. 10.*

⁶ *Matt. vi. 13.*

⁷ *Leben Jesu*, Bd. II. § 100; *Leben Jesu für das deutsche Volk*, p. 515.

⁸ *Leben Jesu Christi*, p. 382.

⁹ *Mark xi. 12; Matt. xxi. 18.*

¹⁰ *Luke xiii. 6.*

the other hand, a prophetic, symbolical representation of the punishment of moral unfruitfulness, mixes together, in contradiction to the text, two entirely different conceptions of one and the same fact, and cannot from a truly human view of the person of Jesus justify, either dogmatically or morally, his exerting a destructive influence upon a barren tree.

22. p. 199. Since *Lücke's* thorough examination of the section of John vii. 53–viii. 11, it is pretty generally acknowledged that 'the Johannean authenticity of the *Perikope*, if not to be decisively rejected, is yet in a high degree doubtful, and that recent criticism has decided fully against its genuineness.'¹ We cannot, however, maintain with *Hase*,² that the narrative shows merely the character of the better apocryphal writings, and lacks those marks which commonly distinguish real occurrences from fictions. The apparent lightness with which Jesus here forgives³ a heinous sin,—upon the condition, it is true, of the most thorough repentance,—early made the narrative appear offensive, and for this reason, it would seem, it found no place in the Synoptics. For that it found its way into the gospel according to John from a quarter connected with the Synoptics, *Baur* has correctly supposed.⁴ Even if it were received into the gospel somewhat later, as its being wanting in some important MSS.⁵ intimates, then the fact that it was received as an addition shows how highly it was esteemed as an authentic tradition of the time following that of the apostles. Its high age is also proved by the fact that it existed in the gospel of the Hebrews, and that Papias appears to have had knowledge of it.⁶ At least from the words, 'history of a woman accused of many crimes' (*ιστορίαν περὶ γυναικὸς ἐπὶ πολλαῖς ἁμαρτίαις διαβληθείσης*), there is no reason for doubting the identity of the narrative, as the designation here is, in all probability, not exact.

But we cannot easily understand how this narrative should have been invented purely to bring out the idea that the power of every sin is broken by the consciousness of its sinfulness. It is not in the fact that, among the Jews, adultery was generally punished by strangling, that the main difficulty lies;⁷ since upon qualified adultery, namely, the criminal transgression of a betrothed woman, the punishment of stoning was pronounced;⁸ and the case would seem to be of this character, as *Meyer* has justly remarked, from the expression 'such' (*τὰς τοιαύτας*).⁹ But that the Pharisees, in consequence of the awakening of the voice of conscience, immediately upon the question of Jesus¹⁰ show themselves beaten and slink silently away; that, as *Baur* expresses it, they actually acknowledge thus, in the presence of Jesus,

¹ *Commentar über das Evangelium des Joh.* Vol. II. p. 245 *et seq.*

² *Leben Jesu*, p. 155.

³ John viii. 11.

⁴ *Kritische Untersuchungen*, p. 170.

⁵ E. g. in the Codex Sinaiticus.

⁶ *Euseb. Hist. Eccles.* III. 40.

⁷ Lev. xx. 10.; Deut. xxii. 22.

⁸ Deut. xxii. 23.

⁹ John viii. 6.

¹⁰ John viii. 7.

the Christian principle of the consciousness of sin, seems rather to stand in the way of the credibility of the narrative. It is to be observed that it was not the design of the Pharisees to procure the condemnation of the woman by Jesus; for in this case they would have had to remind him of the great difference between notorious transgressions and secret sins of the conscience. What they really wanted was to draw from Jesus an answer, which they might use against him,—a declaration either against or for the Mosaic (or perhaps Roman) law; a condemnation of the statutes of the fathers, or of himself and his principles. And this design they failed to accomplish, as Jesus, in his striking way, like in the case of the tribute money, left undecided the special point to which their question was directed, and, instead of remaining in the unfavourable position of a person put to the question, turned questioner himself. If they were justly embarrassed by this turn in the conversation, they were far more so by the words with which he aroused their consciences. At such moments every thing depends upon the power of personal impression; and how great the power was that Jesus exercised upon those around him, especially upon the evil consciences of his opponents, the gospels furnish sufficient evidence.

This narrative is in remarkable keeping with the other attempts made by the Pharisees to embarrass Jesus in regard to the conjugal relation. That they took this position towards him without any external occasion leading them to do so, is not readily to be supposed. An incident such as is here narrated could very naturally lead to further attempts to entrap Jesus, as the Pharisees, especially after the blow they had received, might well feel a strong impulse to return it.

23. p. 210. It is an entirely wrong representation of *E. Renan*¹ when he maintains that, in regard to the poor and to poverty, Jesus taught the doctrine of the Ebionites, '*le pur ébionisme, la doctrine, que les pauvres seuls seront sauvés, que le règne des pauvres va venir.*' This alleged '*goût exagéré de pauvreté,*'²—by which Jesus is affirmed to have been ruled, and in consequence of which he is said to have declared, '*que ne rien posséder fut le véritable état évangélique,*'—is nowhere to be found, in the form maintained, in the teachings of Jesus. He never expressed himself to the effect that the rich as such were excluded from the community of God, as seems to be thought by *E. Renan*; but he simply declared a fact to which experience bears witness, that it is hard for the rich to fulfill the conditions indispensable to admission into the Divine kingdom, and this, not indeed on account of their riches, but because of the *false position of their hearts* towards worldly goods. Besides, it must not be overlooked that the declarations of Jesus concerning the moral dangers of wealth were made during his last abode in Judea, consequently at a point of time when it

¹ Vie de Jésus, p. 179.

² Ib. p. 182.

had become the indispensable duty of his disciples to renounce utterly all dependence upon earthly goods, and devote themselves wholly to the service of the Gospel. That the saying of Jesus has in Matthew¹ and in Luke² suffered a distortion of its original meaning is a fact not to be denied, and that the Ebionitic tradition occasioned the change is at least probable. In the treatment of parallel passages in the gospels, Renan's book is deficient in the acuteness indispensable in the department of comparative criticism.

24. p. 230. In no point does the difference between the fourth gospel and the Synoptics present itself more prominently than in regard to the immediate cause of the criminal process instituted against Jesus. The fourth gospel so represents the incidents preceding the arrest, that the extraordinary excitement caused by the raising of Lazarus from the dead determined the Pharisees to put an immediate stop to Jesus' activity.³ So great was the exasperation of the leaders of the theocratic party at the effect of the raising of Lazarus, that even the life of Lazarus was threatened.⁴ It has justly been considered remarkable that the Synoptics not only know nothing of this cause of the decisive measures of the Sanhedrim against Jesus, but appear even to have had no knowledge of the raising of Lazarus. Yet it is not so easy, as *Lücke*⁵ thinks, to account for the absence of this event in the Synoptics by their ignorance of the fact. Luke, so far from being unacquainted with the events that took place during the last sojourn of Jesus in Judea, has particular accounts of them, drawn from some tolerably full source, unused by the other Evangelists. One who was so well acquainted with the final events in Jerusalem that the story of the widow's mite⁶ did not escape him, must have heard of the raising of Lazarus, if it had really taken place. On this account, apologists like *Meyer*⁷ have of late assumed as unquestionable (!) that the Synoptics were acquainted with the raising of Lazarus, and have sought to explain their silence about it by reference to the alleged Galilean limits, to which those earlier historical compositions were restricted. But this attempt at solving the difficulty is rendered unavailing, as the Synoptics narrate the healing of the blind man at Jericho,⁸ and give a number of other accounts of the last labours of Jesus in Judea.

It certainly does not follow, from the fact of there being no mention of the raising of Lazarus in the first three gospels, that the narrative is an invention. We have shown that the last and only sojourn of Jesus in Judea must have been of longer duration than appears at first sight from the Synoptics. That Jesus during that sojourn wrought cures

¹ Matt. xix. 23.

² John xi. 46.

³ Commentar zum Evang. des Joh. Vol. II. p. 475.

⁴ Ex. Handbuch zum Evang. des Joh. p. 379.

⁵ Mark x. 46; Matt. xx. 29; Luke xviii. 35.

⁶ Luke xviii. 24.

⁷ John xii. 10.

⁸ Luke xxi. 1.

among the people, the Synoptics themselves sufficiently attest.¹ That he effected a miraculous cure of a man in Bethany named Lazarus is, in itself, not improbable. The parable of the poor Lazarus also, who lay sick at the rich man's gate,² passed into the Synoptic tradition. That from such elements, after the lapse of seventy or eighty years, at a considerable distance from the scene of the events, a narrative like that in the fourth gospel³ might form itself, is just as probable as it is certain that the mode of its formation cannot now be determined. It is not impossible that the Lazarus 'carried into Abraham's bosom' ⁴ by the angels—the *symbol of the poor, oppressed people redeemed by Jesus*—became transformed by the later Ephesian tradition into a Lazarus who was raised by Jesus, and as a witness of the great deeds of Jesus gave occasion to the Pharisees for their last decisive measures against him. According to the Synoptics, the purification of the temple was the immediate cause of Jesus' arrest.⁵ This act of his the fourth gospel relates as having taken place upon his first attendance at the Feast in Jerusalem.⁶ The less prejudiced commentators, like *Lücke*, acknowledge the improbability of this event having happened twice,—at the beginning and at the close of the career of Jesus,—not only under precisely the same circumstances, but also in almost the same way; and, assuming the fourth Evangelist to have been an eye-witness, they decide in favour of his account.

There is nothing more improbable, nothing more at variance with the originality which marks all the acts of Jesus, than that he should have done the very same thing at different times in the same place. And it is just as improbable that those whom it affected should have quietly submitted twice to a proceeding that had so arbitrary and violent an appearance. We have already pointed out how little it is to be supposed that Jesus at the very beginning of his public career, before his Messianic consciousness was developed, or his fame established among the people, should have done so bold an act under the very eyes of the Sanhedrim in the capital of Judea,—to say nothing of the fact, to which the Synoptics bear witness, that it was only toward the close of his public life that Jesus entered the city of Jerusalem. But what excited the theocratic party so violently against him, was not only his interference with the administration of the police of the temple, and the disturbance of the public peace within those sacred precincts, but chiefly what was said by him on the occasion.⁷ The words of Jesus, in conformity with the occasion that suggested them, could have had reference only to the temple and its significance for the kingdom of God founded by him; and we have shown in our exposition that in all probability Jesus used the two quotations from the Prophets⁸ against the

¹ Matt. xix. 2; Luke xvii. 11.

² Luke xvi. 20.

³ John xi. 1.

⁴ Luke xvi. 22; *Baur*, Krit. Untersuchungen, p. 249.

⁵ Mark xi. 18; Matt. xxi. 15; Luke xix. 47.

⁶ John ii. 13.

⁷ Mark xi. 18: Πᾶς ὁ ὄχλος ἐκπλήσσετο ἐπὶ τῇ διδαχῇ αὐτοῦ.

⁸ Is. lvi. 7; Jerem. vii. 11.

old theocratic temple, and in favour of the *new spiritual temple* founded by him. The Ephesian tradition has preserved the emphatic words of Jesus, which the Synoptics, though they have put them into the mouths of the witnesses who appeared against him at the examination before a committee of the Sanhedrim,¹ have not ascribed directly to Jesus, out of fear of the misunderstandings that might possibly arise therefrom.

The fourth gospel, from its stand-point, had no such tender considerations for the Jewish-Christian party; but even in this gospel there appears some hesitation in representing Jesus as aiming to destroy the Jewish temple. Accordingly a mystical, allegorical sense is given to the words of Jesus, namely, that he intended to predict by them his resurrection on the third day after his crucifixion. In admitting that Jesus was *not so* understood at the time,² the fourth Evangelist shows that this mystical sense was an interpretation of his own. Had Jesus by these words meant, 'Kill me, and within three days I will rise again,'³ he could not have expressed himself in a manner more artificial and more unintelligible. But the interpretation of the Evangelist (according to our views, not to be confounded with the Apostle John) is also irreconcilable with the New Testament idea of the 'body of Christ.' Nowhere in the New Testament is Jesus' body that died and was raised again represented as the 'real temple of God' (as *Meyer* expresses it); but by the symbolical expression, 'body of Christ,' is meant the *Church*. If we suppose (with *Meyer*) that, with the temple before him, Jesus, when he uttered the language under consideration, pointed to *himself*, such a gesture would not only have had very little propriety, but it would be unintelligible why the disciples did not understand it, or, if they did not understand it, why they did not ask for an explanation. We are not prevented from understanding the words of Jesus as referring to the approaching destruction of the theocratic form of worship, and to the building of the new spiritual temple of the Christian community, by the fact that the building of the new temple took place gradually. With the destruction of the old temple the new one was essentially in existence, built and ready.⁴ That by the words ἐγερῶ αὐτόν the identity of the old temple with the new was asserted by Jesus, cannot correctly be said. In this case it must have read τὸν αὐτόν. Nor is it scriptural doctrine that Jesus raised himself, as it is his Heavenly Father who is always represented as raising him from the dead. Neither is the declaration of Jesus to be understood hypothetically of the desecration of the temple by the Jews, as if he had said: 'Suppose you not only desecrate the temple, but destroy it utterly, I have power to build it up again in the shortest time.' The meaning of the words is concessive rather: 'Instead of

¹ Mark xiv. 58; Matt. xxvi. 61; xxvii. 40.

² John ii. 22.

³ *Meyer*, Ex. Handbuch zum Evang. des Joh. p. 122.

⁴ See Hosea vi. 2. The words of the prophet likewise relate to a *spiritual* Israel renewed by Jehovah.

continuing to defile the temple by trading in offerings, destroy the temple which has become useless since the time of the Baptist, make an end of the temple service, and in the shortest time I will build a new temple, the spiritual temple of my kingdom, for Jews and for Gentiles.'

25. p. 244. One cannot more entirely misunderstand the purpose of Jesus in arguing against the Jewish theologues from Ps. cx. 1, than by adopting the view taken by *Meyer*, namely, that Jesus aimed to make the Pharisees, whose assaults were directed against his Messiahship, feel that they did not even know of *what nature* the Messiah was, although Ps. cx. would 'so easily' (1) have taught them.¹ *Neander* was on the way to an understanding of the passage, when he remarked² that, if we hold the form of words found in Mark to be the original, we are led to conclude that Jesus quoted Ps. cx. to *oppose the idea that the Messiah must be of the lineage of David*, and to assert his Messiahship against those who found in him no evidence of his descent from David. But the erroneous idea about Mark's literary dependence, an error widely spread by Griesbach's hypothesis, together with the concurrence in the common opinion that Jesus was a descendant of David, prevented *Neander* from seeing the truth.

The fact that Paul treats the descent of Jesus from David as a settled matter³ proves nothing against our view, as the apostle proceeds upon the presupposition, current in the apostolic community and resting upon passages of the Old Testament, according to which the descent of Jesus Christ from David and even from Abraham passed for a self-evident proof of his Messianic dignity.⁴ *Bleek* thinks it 'might easily seem' that Jesus, in referring to Ps. cx., intended to intimate that the idea of the Messiah as a descendant of David was not reconcilable with the designation of the same as Lord of David, i.e. it might appear to be the design of Jesus to combat the opinion that the Messiah was the son of David.⁵ By the contrary remark that 'this, however, is not probable,' the opposite *truth* is surely not set aside.

The fact that Jesus was not a descendant of David appears, according to the fourth gospel, to have stood very much in the way of a more general recognition of his Messianic dignity.⁶ Had Jesus had external grounds for holding himself to be of the lineage of David, he would necessarily have been bound to remove the obstacle to the general acknowledgment of him as Messiah by appealing to his Davidic pedigree. That he made no such appeal shows the supposition to be well-grounded that he claimed no relationship to the royal house of David. According to the original form of the words in Mark, whom Luke follows in substance, Jesus took pains to meet the objection

¹ Ex. Handbuch zu Matt. xxii. 41-46.

² Rom. i. 3; ix. 5.

³ Synoptische Erklärung, II. p. 340.

⁴ Leben Jesu Christi, p. 606.

⁵ Gal. iii. 16.

⁶ John vii. 41 *et seq.*

which was made by the Jewish theologians to his Messiahship, and which was based upon his humble origin, especially upon the want in his family of the blood of David,—by a very *simple and popular* mode of reasoning: since David called the Messiah *his* Lord, he could not have expected the Messiah to be one of his sons, *i.e.* of his posterity; for no father, especially with Hebrew ideas of family order, would speak of his son—no ancestor of his descendant—as his *Lord*. The first Evangelist had not the key to the words of Jesus, and understood Jesus as putting a puzzling question to the Pharisees gathered around him, in order to silence them by the difficulty of finding an answer; but also according to this gospel, the only fitting answer they could have given would have been: If such be the case, then the Messiah cannot be expected to come from the family of David.

26. p. 248. The words in Matt. xxiii. 3, in which Jesus is reported to have bidden his disciples to do and to keep all that the Pharisees said (prescribed), are a *Jewish-Christian* addition by the same hand that added the eighteenth and nineteenth verses of the fifth chapter of this same gospel. What *Meyer* means when, in defence of its genuineness as a saying of Jesus, he remarks¹ that Jesus here leaves out of sight the Pharisees' abuse of their office (the office of teaching?), as it existed *in praxi*, is to us unintelligible. *Bleek* very justly observes that Jesus could *not surely* have enjoined observance of all the Pharisaic statutes, as in the same discourse he denounces the Pharisees on account of their casuistical distinctions.² But when *Bleek* is further of opinion, though the opposition between teaching and practice is positively expressed, it was meant to be understood only comparatively that the teaching of the Pharisees which urged the importance of holiness of life (?) was more commendable than their practice, then *Bleek* puts into the mouth of Jesus something entirely different from what he actually did say in the passage referred to. As to the occasion of the denunciatory discourse against the Pharisees, Mark places it rightly when he represents Jesus as addressing it to the people at the temple. The Jews were to decide either against the Pharisees or against him. A position between the two had become morally untenable. That the first Evangelist represents the discourse as addressed to the disciples as well as to the multitude,³ is explained by the fact that he has put together several of the anti-Pharisaic discourses of Jesus taken from the time of his last abode in Jerusalem. Luke, who has taken a passage parallel to that of Matthew from the 'Collection of Sayings,' is in error as to the occasion;⁴ for that Jesus spoke to his host in such a way as he would seem from verse forty to have done, is

¹ Ex. Handbuch über das Evangelium des Matthäus, p. 417.

² Matt. xxiii. 16. Comp. *Bleek*, Synoptische Erklärung, Vol. II. p. 342.

³ Matt. xxiii. 1.

⁴ Comp. Luke xi. 37 with Matt. xxiii. 25.

altogether improbable. From men such as are there described Jesus would hardly have accepted invitations.

27. p. 259. The original substance of the so-called eschatological discourse of Jesus is preserved in Mark and Luke, while in Matthew it is considerably amplified. The exclamation of admiring wonder which the sight of the temple drew from the disciples¹ and which led Jesus to disclose to them the catastrophe impending over the temple and the city, has been erroneously omitted by the first Evangelist. The question as to how far Jesus could have known the coming fate of Jerusalem is answered, from our point of view, by reference to his deep insight into the corrupt and effete condition of the theocracy, and to his full appreciation of the increasing restlessness of the nation under the Roman supremacy. He thus saw that the speedy downfall of Judaism as then existing had become an historical necessity. He was not possessed of an absolute knowledge regarding the final fate of Jerusalem and therefore his predictions have not come true to the letter. In the main, however, he was perfectly correct when he declared the destruction of Jerusalem and of the temple service to be so near that persons then living would witness it.

The real difficulty of the eschatological discourse begins at the point at which Jesus announces his own return, and that in immediate connection with the destruction of Jerusalem. All apologetic attempts to deny such a connection are sophistical and deserve no refutation. According to Mark, the return of the son of man was to take place *ἐν ἐκείναις ταῖς ἡμέραις μετὰ τὴν θλίψιν ἐκείνην*;² according to Matthew, *εὐθέως μετὰ τὴν θλίψιν*.³ First, in the gospel of Luke, to whom the destruction of Jerusalem was a past event, it appears that a considerable interval was to elapse *ἄχρι οὗ πληρωθῶσι καιροὶ ἐθνῶν*.⁴ That thus, according to the Synoptics, Jesus must have been in an error if he expressed himself as they say, there can be no doubt. Although, in accordance with unprejudiced historical criticism, there is no ground for refusing to admit the possibility of such an error in Jesus, yet there are some considerations that forbid the supposition. The idea that the Messiah was to establish his kingdom amidst wonders and signs from heaven, with great splendour, and celestial pomp, was entirely in the spirit of the Jewish theocracy, but not at all in keeping with the spirit and character of Jesus and with the founding of his community. Jesus had indeed, as we have shown, set forth with the greatest distinctness his idea of the Divine kingdom as a spiritual and moral fellowship, in opposition to the theocratic idea of a kingdom of God as an institution of external power. But had he, notwithstanding, taught that, some years after his departure to his Heavenly Father, he would descend

¹ Mark xiii. 1; Luke xxi. 5.

² Matt. xxiv. 29.

³ Mark xiii. 24.

⁴ Luke xxi. 24.

from heaven to erect an outward world-empire, it would have been simply yielding to the theocratic error which he had spent his whole life and labour in combating, *i.e.* he would have placed himself in irreconcilable contradiction to his own life work and to all the purposes of his mission. As we have seen, the disciples did not put to him any question relative to his return *in the body*; and although *Bleek*,¹ for example, considers it probable that such a question was put by them, yet the supposition merely comes from his prejudice in favour of the first gospel. The discourse of Jesus had reference exclusively to the doom impending over Jerusalem and the theocracy; some hints of the future of his kingdom are incidentally connected therewith.

What expressions he used in foretelling the triumph of his cause, closely connected as it was with the downfall of the theocracy, we are not now able to determine. It is not impossible that, in order to present his idea vividly, he may have availed himself of a figurative prophetic mode of speech, like that employed in the books of Daniel and Enoch in regard to the glorious exaltation of the ideal Israel. But that the eschatological discourses of Jesus were conceived in a purely spiritual sense, we learn from the fourth gospel.² There lie before us, in fact, two representations of these discourses: 1. the report of the first three gospels, with its high Jewish-Christian colouring; and 2. the report of the fourth gospel, imbued with the spirit of the Gentile-Christian universality. Since the kingdom of God, as set forth by Jesus also according to the Synoptics, was of an *essentially spiritual and moral nature*, and since it was precisely this conception of it that brought him into collision with the theocracy, we are fully justified in adopting the second representation, and in putting the sensuous, apocalyptic colouring of these discourses to the account of the Palestinian tradition.

28. p. 262. It is a question whether we are authorized to consider the anointing of the person of Jesus, related by Luke (vii. 36), as one and the same with the occurrence mentioned in Mark xiv. 3, Matt. xxvi. 6, and John xii. 1. When an event occurring substantially under the same or tolerably similar circumstances is told twice in the gospels, it is very natural to suppose that the event took place only once, and has been variously understood and represented by tradition. On this account, *Schleiermacher*,³ *Ewald*,⁴ and *Bleek*⁵ have with justice assumed that one occurrence is at the foundation of these two narratives, and that Luke has given it too early a place in the history. If, as *Bleek* remarks, Luke, by the position of the narrative in his gospel,

¹ Synoptische Erklärung, II. p. 352.

² John xiii. 31-xvii. 26.

³ Ueber die Schriften des Lucas, p. 110.

⁴ Die drei ersten Evangelien, p. 342; Geschichte Christus, p. 422.

⁵ Synoptische Erklärung, II. p. 111.

gives us the impression that the scene of the event was in Galilee, then in this case Luke, misled by a false pragmatism, has certainly misplaced a narrative, drawn from his Judaic sources, when he places it in the ante-Judaic period of the Saviour's labours.¹ The similarity of the two stories appears not only in the name of the host, Simon,² and in the fact that, in all the gospels, it is a woman that anointed Jesus,³ but also in the further circumstance that the Evangelists all state that the persons present murmured at the act. The greatest difference between Luke and the other Evangelists appears in the fact, that in Luke the woman is a sinner, who by the anointing expresses her love for Jesus and her sorrow for her sins, while in the other gospels the woman is a loving disciple of Jesus (in the fourth gospel Mary of Bethany), who desires *before his death* to give him a token of her love consecrating him to death. The difference is best explained by the fact that the third Evangelist, having lost the connection of the incident with the near death of Jesus, appears to have concluded that such an act as this could only have been done by a woman, a sinner.

29. p. 274. What the precise words were that Jesus used in the distribution of the bread and wine at the institution of the Lord's Supper, the variations in the evangelical tradition render it difficult to determine. The words in Mark at the giving of the bread are, *Λάβετε, τοῦτό ἐστιν τὸ σῶμά μου*,⁴ and at the giving of the wine, *Τοῦτό ἐστιν τὸ αἷμά μου τῆς διαθήκης τὸ ἐκχυννόμενον ὑπὲρ πολλῶν*. Then follows the declaration of Jesus, that he will no more drink of the fruit of the vine until that day when he will drink it new in the kingdom of God. In Matthew the *λάβετε* at the distribution of the bread is followed by *φάγετε*.⁵ Luke leaves out the imperatives *λάβετε* and *φάγετε*; but we have in his gospel the addition, *ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν διδόμενον*, and the injunction, *τοῦτο ποιεῖτε εἰς τὴν ἐμὴν ἀνάμνησιν*.⁶ With this the relation of the Apostle Paul⁷ substantially agrees: In the distribution of the wine, Matthew adds the requirement, *πίνετε ἐξ αὐτοῦ πάντες*, with the addition of *εἰς ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν το ἐκχυννόμενον*.⁸ According to Luke, Jesus at the distribution of the wine spoke the words, *Τοῦτο τὸ ποτήριον ἡ καινὴ διαθήκη ἐν τῷ αἵματί μου*,⁹ and the assurance that he would no more eat of the bread or drink of the wine preceded the distribution of the Lord's Supper. According to Paul, Jesus at the giving of the wine repeated the monition that the Lord's Supper was to be observed

¹ The words, vii. 34, 'The son of man is come eating and drinking,' suggested to Luke the idea of introducing at this point an account of the entertainment at the Pharisee's house.

² Luke vii. 40; Mark xiv. 3; Matt. xxvi. 6.

³ According to John xii. 3, Mary of Bethany.

⁴ Mark xiv. 22.

⁵ Matt. xxvi. 26.

⁶ Luke xxii. 19.

⁷ 1 Cor. xi. 24.

⁸ Matt. xxvi. 27.

⁹ Luke xxii. 20.

in remembrance of him.¹ It may be questioned which report is nearer to the original, Mark's or Paul's (Paul is Luke's authority). In Matthew, the multiplied forms of command and the addition of *εἰς ἀφ᾽ ἑσιν ἀμαρτιῶν* clearly indicate amplifications. To the assertion of Paul that he received his account of the Lord's Supper 'from the Lord' (*ἀπὸ τοῦ κυρίου*) too great weight must not be given, as by the words 'from the Lord' he intended only to say that his account really went back to the Lord,—i.e. the Lord's institution was the source of his report,—just as elsewhere in the same manner he appeals to a 'word of the Lord' (*λόγος κυρίου*),² without meaning to be understood as having had a supernatural revelation. That he did not obtain that information in consequence of such a revelation and of a special commission, is proved by his making no mention of a 'revelation' (*ἀποκάλυψις*) made to him or to his informant, but still more fully by his using the expression 'I received' (*ἐγὼ παρέλαβον*) indicative of tradition as his authority.³ Peter, on the other hand, is undoubtedly the authentic voucher of the account in Mark, and there is internal evidence that this Evangelist comes nearest to the exact words of Jesus. Had Jesus said that the disciples were to repeat the Lord's Supper in remembrance of him, it would hardly have passed unnoticed by the oldest tradition. It is much more probable that, after the Lord's Supper was once formally observed as a divine service by the apostolic communities, it was sought to justify this observance by an express command of Jesus. So also the more difficult formula in Mark at the distribution of the cup, *Τοῦτό ἐστιν τὸ αἶμά μου τῆς διαθήκης*,⁴ is to be preferred to the less difficult, *Τοῦτο τὸ ποτήριον ἡ καινὴ διαθήκη ἐν τῷ ἐμῷ αἵματι*.⁵ When, finally, Paul omits entirely the declaration of Jesus that he would drink no more of the fruit of the vine,⁶ and adds of his own authority that the Lord's Supper was never to be observed without showing forth the Lord's death,⁷ Paul's omission is explained by the difficulty of the declaration of Jesus; but at the same time the mention of this difficult passage by Mark is the surest pledge of its authenticity.

30. p. 294. The Synoptics know nothing of an examination which, immediately after his arrest in the garden, Jesus had to undergo before Annas. According to their account he was at once led away to a preliminary examination before Caiaphas, the president of the High Council; ⁸ in the court of the Hall of Justice the denial of Peter took place (the fourth gospel states it as having occurred in the court of the palace of Annas), and not until the morning was the decisive public sitting held. All attempts to reconcile the fourth gospel with the Synoptical account, by

¹ 1 Cor. xi. 25.

² Compare Gal. i. 12; 1 Thess. ii. 13; 2 Thess. iii. 6.

³ Mark xiv. 24.

⁴ Mark xiv. 25.

⁵ Mark xiv. 53; Matt. xxvi. 57; Luke xxii. 54.

⁶ 1 Thess. iv. 15.

⁷ 1 Cor. xi. 25.

⁸ 1 Cor. xi. 26.

laying the scene from the denial of Peter¹ within the precincts of the palace of Caiaphas, are rendered unavailing by the fact that the leading away of Jesus from Annas to Caiaphas is reported much later.² To take the aorist ἀπέστειλεν in the passage referred to as a pluperfect is only a poor expedient of the harmonists. We should rather approve of reading οὖν, with *Lachmann*, after ἀπέστειλεν, whereby the explanation of the aorist as a pluperfect becomes altogether inadmissible. According to the fourth gospel, Jesus was not examined at all by Caiaphas, but was immediately sent by him to Pilate.³ Further, as this gospel states, sentence of death was not pronounced by the High Council upon Jesus, but only urgently sought from Pilate, who then delivered Jesus unto them to be crucified.⁴ That Jesus was examined by a person like Annas, who exercised no official functions as High Priest, who had been deposed by the Procurator Valerius Gratus, and was out of favour with the Romans, is not in itself very probable. That Annas was the supreme judge, and that the acting High Priest did not undertake such examinations in his own person,⁵ are both unfounded conjectures. It is much more probable, that in so weighty a matter, and at a grand sitting,⁶ the presiding High Priest conducted in his own person the examination upon the result of which the issue of the case essentially depended. Besides, the hearing before Annas, according to the fourth gospel, led to no result whatever.⁷ The supposition of *Bleek*, that Luke also reports the hearing before Annas,⁸—whose name certainly is once mentioned in the gospel,—and that Matthew, because the name of the High Priest conducting the examination was not given in the report which he used, erroneously thought it was Caiaphas,⁹ rests upon the incorrect assumption that Mark copied the other two Evangelists. The greatest difficulty is in ascertaining why the fourth Evangelist was led to suppose that Jesus was examined by Annas and not by Caiaphas. The difficulty is not fully explained by supposing that the Evangelist desired to strengthen the evangelical evidence of the unbelief of the Jews by showing that two high priests had passed sentence of condemnation upon Jesus.¹⁰ The most probable idea is that the fourth Evangelist here also followed the later tradition, current in Asia Minor, according to which at the instigation of Caiaphas the Sanhedrim had at an earlier period come to the decision which condemned Jesus to death.¹¹ Thus also is solved the enigma, that, according to the fourth Evangelist, neither on the night of the arrest nor on the following morning was any condemnation passed upon Jesus by the High Council, and that the examination of Jesus by Annas

¹ John xviii. 15.² John xviii. 24.³ John xviii. 28.⁴ John xix. 16.⁵ Compare *Ewald*, Geschichte Christus, p. 472.⁶ Mark xiv. 53; Matt. xxvi. 57 et seq.⁷ John xviii. 19–23.⁸ Luke xxii. 54.⁹ Synoptische Erklärung, II. p. 438.¹⁰ *Baur*, Kritische Untersuchungen, p. 268.¹¹ John xi. 49–57.

appears to have been without aim, or at all events could have served only for the information of Pilate.

31. p. 296. As, with the exception of Luke, no Evangelist mentions Pilate's sending Jesus to Herod, and especially as the older tradition, which Mark and Matthew follow, knows nothing of it, there arises no slight doubt of the historical credibility of the story. We do not see why the other Synoptics should not have mentioned so interesting an episode, had they been acquainted with it; neither do we see how, in so few hours, so much could have taken place on the day on which Jesus was crucified:—a full session of the High Council, the delivery of Jesus to Pilate, Pilate's examination of Jesus, the appeal to the people regarding the release of a prisoner, the sending of Jesus to Herod, Herod's examination of Jesus, &c. The scene with Herod would at least have occupied several hours. The narrative certainly was not invented by the third Evangelist, but it was generated by the later *Gentile-Christian* tradition, standing further removed from the scene of the events. The tradition took this direction from the same cause which is more distinctly visible in the fourth gospel, namely, for the purpose of throwing upon Judaism and its representatives the chief guilt of the crucifixion of Jesus, and of relieving Pilate, the representative of the Gentiles, as much as possible from the responsibility. The narrative may rest upon the fact, that not only the Pharisees but also the Herodians were determined opposers of Jesus, and these, with Herod Antipas at their head, may, during the last abode of Jesus in Judea, have repeatedly discharged against him the arrows of their scorn, and rejoiced from their hearts at his condemnation and his crucifixion.